

Saturn ■ PC CD-ROM ■ 3DO ■ PlayStation ■ 32X ■ Ultra 64 ■ Jaguar ■ Arcade ■ On-Line

NEXT

GENERATION

Leading edge computer and video games

July 1995

Can
3DO
keep up?

**Atari
talks back**
Get ready to rumble.
Sam Tramiel in the
NEXT Generation
interview

Even when **Sony PlayStation** games
look this good, 3DO can still win the
32-bit race. Find out how on page 34

volume one

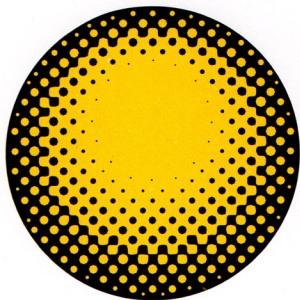
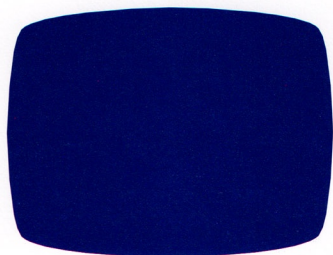
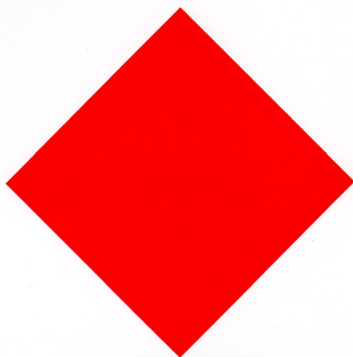
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PlayStation's *Wipeout* from Psygnosis (previewed on page 46)
pushes game graphics further than any previous home system. The
combination of Sony's technology with Softimage's SGI software
threatens to eclipse *Ridge Racer* as the definitive PlayStation racer

\$4.99 U.S./\$5.99 CAN.



Daytona USA: NEXT Generation takes Saturn's ultimate racer for the world's first test drive, page 66



3DO: The second coming?

Ultra 64 is delayed until 1996.

The cost of **Saturn's** rushed launch is a drought of killer games.

PlayStation faces an inflated US price, at the hands of the **strongest Yen** in recent history.

This summer — at odds with the pessimism of all Trip Hawkins' critics — 3DO has a chance to steal the **32bit crown** from under the noses of its competitors. If **Panasonic and Goldstar**, 3DO's hardware manufacturers, can admit to themselves that 3DO is not in fit enough condition to **battle toe-to-toe** with PlayStation and Saturn at the **same price**, then a \$199 or even \$249 3DO could sell enough units to **rush** 3DO to the top of the next generation tree.

It may not be possible.

But it could be 3DO's only chance of **long-term survival**.

3DO: Past, Present **and** Future, starts on page 34

NEXT GENERATION

July 1995

Contact

NEXT Generation
Imagine Publishing
1350 Old Bayshore Highway, Suite 210
Burlingame CA 94010
Subscriptions 415. 696. 1661
Advertising 415. 696. 1688
Editorial 415. 696. 1688
FAX 415. 696. 1678
E-mail ngonline@imagine-inc.com

Staff

Neil West chief
Douglass Perry managing editor
Trent Ward scoop
Eugene Wang art codirector
Richard Szeto art codirector

Editorial Contributors

Patrick Baggett
Dan Bennett
Nicolas di Costanzo
Chris Hudak
Jeff Lundrigan
Mark James Ramshaw
Mike Salmon
Todd Vaughn
Marcus Webb
Bernard Yee
EDGE Magazine

Photographic Contributors

Jude Edginton
Mark Koehler

Advertising

Doug Faust advertising manager
Aldo Ghiozzi account executive
Simon Whitcombe business development

Subscriptions

Gail Egbert subscription director
Michelle Schaiman customer services

Production

Richard Lesevoy production director
Roger Burchill production coordinator

Imagine Publications, Inc.

Jonathan Simpson-Bint publisher
Mary Keeney marketing coordinator
Maryanne Napoli die single copy sales
Doug Ellerbe Haynie circulation analyst
Bruce Eldridge newstand sales manager
Tom Valentino vice president/CFO
Chris Anderson president

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Produced in the United States of America.

Parts of NEXT Generation refresh the parts of EDGE that other maps can't reach, and it's a mutual thing. Tally Sue, you're the best. Suzanne, huge wavy ya.



Atari's boss talks back

Sam Tramiel is the president and CEO of Atari Corporation, the company responsible for Jaguar. NEXT Generation has been one of Atari's most outspoken critics, but Sam Tramiel isn't afraid of being the underdog and claims he has a secret weapon to beat Sony



3DO: past, present, future

Two years ago, 3DO had the world at its feet: an intriguing business model; the backing of heavyweight believers; the claim of a huge leap in graphical performance; and — the trump card — Trip Hawkins in the role of evangelist. Can the glory days of 1993 return?



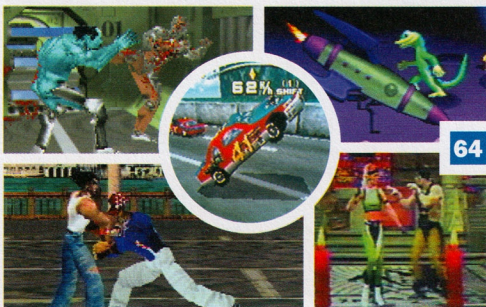
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Ultra 64 revealed (and delayed) • PlayStation US price and launch date announced • Hasbro's VR "Toaster" — the first real home VR? • Intel's Pentium-beater • Saturn's Virtua Fighter 2 from AM2



Alphas

Wipeout and Demolition Derby from Psygnosis complete the PlayStation's launch lineup of awesome 32-bit software. Another two NEXT Generation exclusives



Finals: 50 new game reviews

Definitive reviews of the month's software releases, on all platforms. At the end of the day, it's the games that matter — not the hardware. Finals tells you which games are the best

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Sam Tramiel, President and CEO of Atari Corporation, explains why he believes Jaguar can still win

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3DO: past, present, future

What is the future for 3DO? What has been achieved so far? A NEXT Generation report

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Alphas

Focusing on PlayStation games, we present several games from the far reaches of the globe. Wipeout (PlayStation); Highlander (Jaguar); Team 17 Gaman (PlayStation); Ray Force (Saturn); Gunner's Heaven (PlayStation); Demo Derby (PlayStation); Frankenstein (Mac); Virtua Racing (Saturn); Krazy Ivan (PlayStation)

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Finals

50 reviews for the game-critical crowds. Yell and scream if you must, in agreement or disgust, we'll be back next month doing it again. Tekken (PlayStation); Daytona USA (Saturn); Gex (3DO); Arcsors (Jaguar); Zaxxon's Motherbase 2000 (Sega 32X); BioForge (PC); Surgical Strike (Sega CD); The Punisher (Genesis); Justice League Task Force (SNES); MK3 (Arcade)

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NEXT Generation #8 arrives on newsstands on July 25. Find out how to subscribe on page 32

BOOT UP. STRAP IN. HOLD ON.

...and blast away on the ultimate thrill ride.

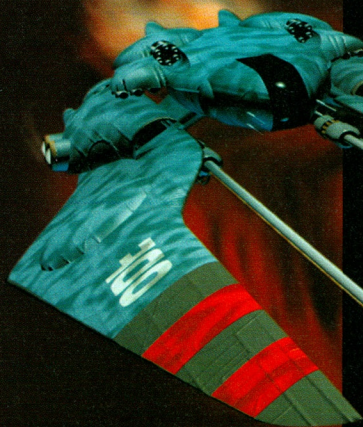
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Atari and Jaguar have come into their fair share of criticism (Jaguar owners would say more than their fair share) from NEXT Generation: bad games, delays, and a CD-ROM player that looks like a toilet haven't helped. But Sam Tramiel is used to being the underdog, and Atari hasn't been beaten yet. It's the one you've been waiting for, let's get ready to rumble, as...

Atari's President talks back

Sam Tramiel is the President & CEO of Atari Corp., the company responsible for Jaguar. Whereas Atari, as a name, is as old as videogaming itself, Jaguar is relatively new on the scene. While remaining open minded, **NEXT Generation** has never been a big fan of Jaguar. The games have been less than adequate, the system has been too expensive, and with PlayStation and Saturn looming on the horizon, Jaguar's appeal has never added up to the "must have" status of its rivals.

But now Jaguar is priced at just \$149 and the games are improving. Is it too little too late? Over to Sam Tramiel, to find out what tricks Atari still has up its sleeve...

Jaguar: predator or pussy cat?

NG: How many Jaguars have been sold to date?

Sam: Approximately 150,000 machines in the US. We wish we'd sold more Jaguars in '94: the first software was very, very late. Now the software's coming up, so things are much better.

NG: What are you doing to improve sales?

Sam: The retail price — that's the big push that we did. Sales have gone off better since the price has been dropped to \$149.

NG: Is Jaguar really 64-bit?

Sam: Absolutely, uncategorically yes. If you look at the PCB, there are 64 data paths going into the UM. This is 64-bit architecture. Look at a PC, they call Pentium a 64-bit system, it is, but they also have 8-bit chips and 8-bit parts of the system as well; the clock is 8-bit. In Jaguar there's 16-bit, 32-bit, and 64-bit in parts of it. Trip Hawkins tried to screw us up with that. It is a 64-bit architecture, there's no two ways about it.

NG: How do you perceive Jaguar's position in the marketplace right now?

Sam: As the next generation machine which is affordable to the marketplace.

NG: And how do you see this changing over the next nine months as the new machines from Sega, Nintendo, and Sony are released?

Sam: It's a very hard question to answer without knowing the other machine's prices and exactly what will happen with Sony and Sega. The machines in Japan today sell for around \$500 each, at the current exchange rates. If they bring them in at those kinds of prices, then the public won't buy them at all, it's just way too expensive.

NG: Jaguar hasn't always been at \$149. Up until recently it's been \$249 and higher. How do you feel about that as a price point now? Do you think that was too high?

Sam: I think it was too high, but at that time we had no choice. Our costs were just beginning to come into play. And we had to be at \$249. But it was too high. We sold a good number of machines, though less than we wanted to sell. It was too expensive for the gaming consumer.

NG: Has the Jaguar been profitable for Atari?

Sam: Oh no. Not yet, not at all. We're investing in the future of the Jaguar.

NG: And in what time frame do you foresee the

talking

"Absolutely, uncategorically, Jaguar is a 64-bit machine. Trip Hawkins tried to screw us up with that. It's a 64-bit architecture, there's no two ways about it"

Jaguar becoming a profitable product?

Sam: That's one of those questions I can't answer, I'm not allowed to answer. We have our plans. One thing I can say is that it's a software driven business. We're using the hardware like Gillette does with razors and razor blades. We sell the razor for cost, or even below, to make it up in software. So as software sales comes up, and there's a higher ratio of software sales to hardware, then we'll start making money.

NG: So you're figuring on Jaguar being around for a couple more years at least?

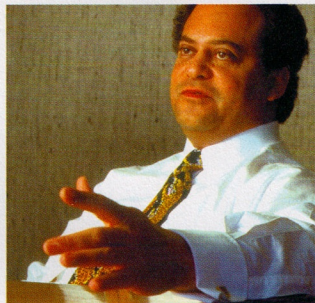
Sam: We plan for Jaguar to be here for a long time. We're working on a Jaguar 2 right now, downstairs, as we speak. And Jaguar 2 will be software compatible with Jaguar 1, so all the Jaguar 1 software will be compatible with Jaguar 2. We're not hyping it like Trip Hawkins is hyping M2, because Jaguar 1 has a long life ahead of it at \$149. It will be a very successful product.

NG: So it's a long-term buck you're making with Jaguar. In the meantime, Atari still has to pay its bills. How much of a help was the legal settlement and the cash injection from Sega last year?

Sam: It was a major help. Either we are to go out and get financing from the public, from the street as it's called, or we do it in a different way. As it turned out, Sega came in, they made an agreement with us, and that was our financing.

NG: Can you outline the bones of the legal dispute that led to this settlement?

Sam: It started off as a fight. It was a patent lawsuit, that they'd copied certain patents on our original technologies, dating back to '84 and earlier. So Nintendo had already paid on a similar case, through Time Warner, to us. Sega knew that it had a tough, tough case. A judge decided in the preliminary hearing that they were going to lose the case. So we had a settlement discussion. And out of that came a friendly agreement, and they



walked away very friendly with us.

NG: So Sega made a cash settlement — ending up owning 7% of the company. But what does this new "friendly" relationship involve?

Sam: We can cross license up to five titles a year on each other's systems. We can also publish on each other's platforms. So we could publish *Tempest 2000*, if we wanted to, on Saturn as an example. They could publish *Virtua Fighter* on Jaguar if they wanted to. So far it's been a very friendly agreement.

NG: But at this point there has been no actual fruits of this "friendship," no Sega games on the Jaguar or vice versa...

Sam: Correct, but we have both chosen titles.

The old kids on the block

NG: What would Atari's best friends say about Atari as a company?

Sam: We are a very lean organization that is trying to promote the business. We've been in business now for, gosh, more than 20 years and we just love this business, we're really dedicated to it. So we're not looking at this as how to make a quick buck. We love the entertainment and electronic business. I think our friends know that.

NG: And what do you think your worst enemies would say about Atari?

Sam: That we're cheap. We strike a hard bargain. That's the most criticism that we get. And we do, we are hard negotiators.

NG: Can you just explain who owns Atari, what's the relationship between Jaguar and Atari coin-ops and all the rest?

Sam: Sure. The Atari Corporation is a public company traded on the American Stock Exchange. It started July 1984 in a transaction between our family (the Tramiel family) and Warner Communications — which is now Time Warner. And we took over the assets of Atari Inc. at that time. So that's what Atari Corp. is. And our family owns close to 50% in the high 40's, Time Warner has a big chunk, Sega has 7% and the rest is in the public hands. Now, the other Atari — Atari coin-ops — how it works in the Time Warner group is very confusing to me, I'm not really clear myself,



Two generations of the Tramiel family have led Atari. Sam's father, Jack, was the previous boss, and still maintains an involvement in the company

but it's in the Time Warner group. And Atari Games is the coin-op division of Time Warner, so they can do coin-op games and that's all they can do — we have the Atari name on everything except the coin-operated videogames.

NG: So some shared financial backing ensures that there is a relationship between Atari home consoles and Atari coin-op machines.

Sam: Yes, we're good friends with the guys at Time Warner Interactive. And right now they're developing a system called Kojag which is a coin operated machine based on the Jaguar technology. The Kojag is Jaguar plus some more hardware. They beefed up the audio system and threw in a 68030 as well. With a coin-operated machine, if they add on another \$20, they don't care.

There should be a game coming out in June. It should be the first coin-op machine based on that technology. I hear it's a fantastic game. And that will then eventually find its way onto the Jaguar home console. I think they have five or six titles in development right now on Kojag.

NG: How do you think that the Atari name has been perceived differently over the years, and where do you think it stands today?

Sam: It's a question of where you're looking at that in Europe or the United States. In Europe, because of our success in the European computer business, we're known as a high technology consumer company.

In the US, we're still very well known but it's known as a game company. That's where it's at. And it's our job to show them that we're still here and we have a great new exciting machine and get that message across big time.

NG: Do you think there's a danger that because the very first videogames were badged Atari, that now — in 1995 — there's a danger the Atari name could be perceived as old fashioned, and outdated? Kind of like, "Granddad's videogame system?"

Sam: I want this to be a very frank discussion and I agree with you. We've done actual focus groups in the US about that very issue. And people do have the perception of "Oh Atari, it was the first, it was great. But what is it doing now?" So you'll notice that on the boxes of our product, "Jaguar" is the big thing and we have "Atari" small in the corner. So we're using the Jaguar name, saying "Jaguar, Jaguar, Jaguar — by Atari," and then slowly bringing the Atari name back up.

Playing with the big boys

NG: Up against Nintendo, certainly Sony and perhaps Sega as well, Atari is a tiny company, and has to be regarded as the underdog, right?

Sam: Absolutely. That's what we are, of course. I mean, compared to Sony, everyone's an underdog. Sony is a \$40 billion a year sales corporation. Nintendo is much bigger than we are but it is one tenth the size of Sony. But the consumer doesn't care what the size is at all. It doesn't know, it doesn't really care. What is the best value? What is the most fun a customer can have with the system? That's what the customer cares about.



NG: Looking to the battle ahead, when Sega and Nintendo launch their machines against Jaguar, the three companies will be battling head to head.

The last time this happened was in the hand-held market, when Nintendo was pushing GameBoy, Sega had Game Gear, and you guys had the Lynx. For various reasons, the Lynx failed very early on. Are there any parallels between what happened then and what could happen this time around?

Sam: I don't think so. I think you can't compare that marketplace to this marketplace. The hand-held marketplace is minuscule compared to the set-top box marketplace, and there are many complicated issues on Lynx which I don't want to get into right now of why it wasn't a "fair" battle on that side. This one is a fair battle.

NG: What do you tell someone who won't buy a Jaguar today because he's waiting for PlayStation?

Sam: A lot of people are doing that. The marketplace right now, we perceive as extremely slow. The 16-bit market is going down like a lead balloon — really fast. And our system and 3DO are selling, but not really going places right now. And I'm convinced the consumer is out there saying, "I'm confused." You know, he's thinking "I want to wait and see what happens with Sony? What does this Saturn thing look like? Where is pricing going?" And so on.

If I can convince them, the reality is that we are at \$149, whereas the competition will be at \$300 or \$400 plus dollars. We are an affordable system if you buy now. It's not a lot of money and it's a great, great, next generation machine.

NG: What do you think of Saturn as a machine?

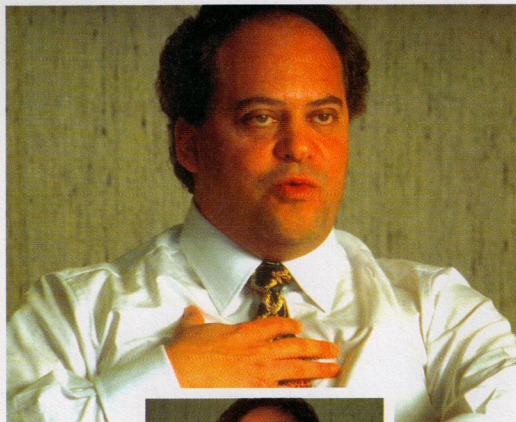
Sam: Sega is my friend, but I'd still have to say that Saturn is a pooch. It's a mess inside, and no one in the industry is impressed with the technology in the Saturn.

NG: Do you think that Sega is facing a much tougher fight in the next generation marketplace than it had anticipated?

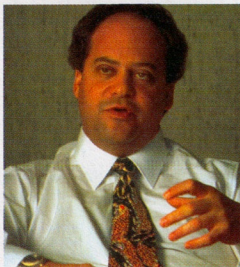
Atari has come along way in its 23-year history. Nolan Bushnell, Atari's founder, is interviewed the April issue, NG 4

"We've been in this business for more than 20 years and we just love this business. We're really dedicated to it. We're not looking at this as how to make a quick buck"

talking



Atari remains bullish in defense of Jaguar's future, even in the face of stronger, bigger, competition



Sam: I think that Mr. Nakayama knew he was going to have a fight. He's a very smart man. But when you're always at the top of the heap, you'll always have a problem staying up there in this industry. Atari was on top, Nintendo was on top, Sega

"We plan for Jaguar to be here for a long time. We're working on a Jaguar 2 right now, downstairs, as we speak"

was on top — we'll see who comes out on top this time. You can't be king of the mountain most every time; this is a tough business. Our consumer is very fickle. They're not like a loyal car buyer who buys a Toyota every year. They'll switch around and buy whatever is the neatest, coolest thing at the time.

NG: Does Sony know what it's doing?

Sam: In many things, Sony absolutely knows what it's doing. I think that Sony makes a great DiscMan. But it has lost its drive, its focus. When Mr. Morita, Sony's leader, was alive and powerful, he had a very strong focus of where the company was going. Now, I believe, in general, Sony is quite confused as a corporation.

NG: What about Sony Computer Entertainment, the division handling PlayStation?

Sam: I don't know that division very well. I have one friend over there. I know the staff was having fights internally on the

pricing of the machine; will the hardware guys win? Will the software guys win? I don't know.

NG: Would you describe the manner of Sony's "invasion" of the gaming market as arrogant?

Sam: Yes. I think that's very fair. Were you at ECTS [European Computer Trade Show]? Our booth was next door to the Sony booth and Sony's was... enormous. It was a huge booth, they had blaring music, we couldn't hear ourselves talk in our stands. We asked them to turn it down, they wouldn't. Their posters looked dreadful. It was just horrible. I think it was very tasteless. They were like a gorilla in a china shop.

NG: Sony is saying that PlayStation will come out at \$299 in the US, and rumors would suggest that a \$249 price is possible. This would be a tremendous threat even to a \$149 Jaguar, right?

Sam: If Sony comes in at \$249 or \$299, we'll do whatever we can to have the ITC — that's the International Trade Commission of the United States — to go after them. That's called dumping. You can't have the Japanese consumer paying a fattened dollar price, then subsidize the product and dump it in the United States for \$249 and kill the US manufacturers. It's against the law.

NG: There's actually a law against doing that?

Sam: Yes. It's absolutely against the law. That sort of operation is called dumping and there's an anti-dumping provision.

NG: And Atari would have no hesitation in bringing the law into effect on this one?

Sam: In a nanosecond. You can't do that. We'll go for it, we're not going to be put out of business.

NG: So what would you see as a fair price — a legal price — for PlayStation in the US?

Sam: \$500.

NG: The same as it was priced in Japan.

Sam: Exactly. And as long as we can keep pricing good software for our machine at \$149, we've got a very good chance of giving them a difficult time.

NG: And what about 3DO? Where's Trip Hawkins right now?

Sam: New York. I think [laughs]. He was just launching his M2 statement.

I think 3DO is really struggling, from what I understand. Trip is a very clever guy also, he might pull something out of the bag. But his manufacturers of the machine have to make money on the hardware, they make no money off the

software. So how do they bring the price down to a low price? I don't see how they could do that. Why should they do that?

NG: 3DO would counter that argument by saying that because the hardware manufacturers are also investors in The 3DO Company — and hence will benefit from its long-term profitability — these manufacturers are sympathetic to the Gillette "razors/razor-



blade" philosophy that you described earlier.

Sam: No, no, no, that's peanuts to them. That's baloney. I don't see that.

NG: So when do you see 3DO disappearing?

Sam: In the foreseeable future I see the players being Nintendo, Sega, Sony, and Atari. In my humble opinion, I don't see 3DO being in there.

NG: So how much longer do you think 3DO will remain in the business?

Sam: A couple of years.

Jaguar, the future

NG: Why has the Jaguar CD been so delayed in reaching the stores?

Sam: We're waiting until the software is right.

NG: Should Jag have had CD-ROM from outset?

Sam: No. The reason why, in our opinion, is very simple: it's a question of the retail price. What can the consumer buy and afford at the very beginning? We went back to our Commodore 64 experience in the early '80s. If you can buy a machine for \$159, and then later buy a CD as an add-on, you can afford it. To have it all in one package at \$300 or \$400, it's just too expensive.

NG: What percentage of the current Jaguar owners do you see buying the Jaguar CD add-on when it goes on sale?

Sam: Going back again to the Commodore 64 analogy, we found almost 100% percent of Commodore 64 owners bought a floppy disk drive when they were made available, with a lag time of between three and six months.

Right now we're expecting that 50% of Jaguar owners will buy CD players. And if it's a higher percentage then, well, great.

NG: And eventually you'll be able to buy an integrated machine with a Jaguar and a Jaguar CD-ROM player built in?

Sam: Yes, eventually it will be integrated.

NG: And at that point will Jaguar games be available only on CD?

Sam: No, we will still make cartridges as well. I can't abandon the basic Jaguar owners. Eventually CDs will become more and more the mainstay.

NG: When will Jaguar 2 be released?

Sam: Development systems will be ready this summer and it will begin shipping in the second half of '96 — that's the present plan. But that's all I can say right now.

NG: Can you tell us a little about the Virtual Reality add-on for Jaguar?

Sam: It's developed by Virtuality. It's full motion tracking and stereoscopic display. We've done a lot of study on what is the right VR system, and Virtuality is the best. They know their stuff. They have a lot of experience.

NG: But they've never had to produce a system for a mass market price, they're used to making VR units that cost tens of thousands of dollars...

Sam: They won't be producing it, they're just designing it. We will have a mass manufacturer in Japan, Taiwan, or someone else in south east Asia produce it for us.

NG: And what price do you think constitutes mass market?



Sam:

That's a good question. When the final costs come in, we can decide, but I'm hoping that it will be \$300 or less for the system.

NG: Sega announced plans to release a low-cost virtual reality system a couple of years ago, but the project was put on ice — simply because it just couldn't be done, from a price/technology point of view. Then, having been rumored for a long time that Nintendo was working on a Virtual Reality headset, they show Virtual Boy — which is such a watered-down, poor relation of genuine VR that it's hardly VR at all. Now, if Nintendo can't get it right, how can anyone else get it right?

Sam: I don't think Nintendo is known to be a fantastic hardware company. When have they ever come out with great technology? NES was not a piece of great technology — it was an 8-bit machine like Atari's 2600.

But that's all I can say about our Virtual Reality product right now. If it doesn't work out as we planned, we won't sell it. There's no way: I will not sell it if it's not doing things exactly right.

The games...

NG: Are you a gamer yourself, Sam?

Sam: Yes, I still like games — not as much as my two boys do — but I still do play videogames.

NG: How do you personally feel about the quality of Jaguar games so far?

Sam: Honestly, it's been uneven. There have been some stellar games, and some games which were not stellar games. This industry is like the movie industry in as much as you're never quite sure which games will be great and which games will not be great — looking back you say, "of course, I shouldn't have done that." And we're getting better and better and better at utilizing Jaguar and its benefits. The software that's coming out over the next few months are just — we think — great, great games.

NG: Most of the best games on Jaguar at this point have been PC ports, such as *Theme Park* and

Atari's CD-ROM player for the Jaguar has suffered interminable delays due to the lack of quality games

"If Sony comes in at \$299 or \$249 then we'll do whatever we can to have the ITC (International Trade Commission) of the United States go after them. That's what's called dumping, and it's against the law"

talking



Atari's HQ in Sunnyvale, California, marks the site of the US' only major player in the videogame hardware business

"I don't think Nintendo is known as a great hardware company. When have they ever come out with great technology?"

Syndicate. But there's nothing that is the equivalent of Sega's *Sonic The Hedgehog* or Nintendo's *Mario*. So far Jaguar has failed to produce an....

Sam: ...the icon game, right. Our competitor, 3DO, does not have an icon game. Sony does not have an icon game. But we do think it is a nice thing to have an icon game. We're going to work on two or three different ideas at one time to see which one really takes hold. There's an old coin-op from the old Atari games called *Major Havoc*. It was a *Tempest* game from a technology point of view, with vector graphics. The game featured *Major Havoc* who goes out and saves a space station. He's a very cool character.

We're going to modernize him and make him into an Atari character, bring him back from the '80s.

NG: How do you think the quality of Jaguar games compares to those on PlayStation and Saturn?

Sam: Well the Jaguar stuff you see so far is cartridge stuff. And it's hard to compare a cartridge piece of software to a CD piece of software. So it's hard to compare our games that way. From the gameplay point of view, I'll put up our stuff against anything that they have. And our CD stuff will be just as cool as theirs.

NG: Does Atari's history and experience help in game development?

Sam: We are doing Jaguar games now, where the designer looks at the old 2600 game from a gameplay point of view, and says that was a great game to play, now let's make it to our technology. And it's unbelievable comparing the two: it's just day and night, from a graphics point of view. In gameplay, it's very, very similar.

It's like going in the movie industry from a

black and white silent movie to today's color talking movies. It's the same basic plots, they just look better. Better effects, the style has changed, but they're the same.

NG: In terms of system power, would you acknowledge that Jaguar isn't as powerful as PlayStation or Saturn?

Sam: No. Absolutely not. Jaguar is as powerful, if not more powerfully than Saturn. That we are convinced of, from the technology that we've seen.

NG: And do you think that the Jaguar games released so far would support that point of view?

Sam: Absolutely. *Alien Vs. Predator*, *Iron Soldier*, and *Tempest 2000* — these are things you couldn't do on any 16-bit machine and Saturn couldn't do them any better than Jaguar can.

We've got *Tempest 2000* coming out on the PC in the next few months, and what our development has proved is that PC 486s just don't have the horsepower to do what the Jaguar can. The PlayStation, I must say, is a little, little bit more powerful in certain areas — but not in others — it's a little bit more stronger machine than Jaguar. A little, little bit. But Jaguar 2 will blow it away.

NG: So by placing the price of the original Jaguar at \$149, when the PlayStation and Saturn will be priced at least at \$300, there's no acknowledgement that Jaguar is a weaker machine and the others are a leap ahead?

Sam: The others are definitely not a leap ahead. As I said, Saturn is the same, if not even less, technology than Jaguar. PlayStation is a little bit more — not more technology, but PlayStation does have more memory than Jaguar, it's using more silicon as a solution.

NG: You must be a little bit disappointed with the level of third party support for Jaguar so far.

Sam: A little bit, but not seriously. We want to be the major publisher on our system. That's where we see ourselves making money to move Jaguar forward. Anyone who's got a good third party title, we will go get the license from them, we'll get the

game developed, we'll publish it — like we are doing with *Mortal Kombat 3*. And we welcome third party people on the platform, there's no pressure.

NG: So you're glad that Atari is developing and publishing for

Jaguar, rather than anyone else?

Sam: We want to do it. I was reading a Nintendo statement last night, the forecast for its business, and it said, a) they will export much less because the yen is too strong, they will focus on the Japanese marketplace, and b) they will publish more of the titles themselves. They want to make more of the money themselves. For hardware makers to succeed, they have got to be significant publishers on their own platforms.

NG: And this is how Atari will succeed?

Sam: We're here, we're competing, and we will be a major competitor through the '90s. I think that's a really important message.

ng

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PC Gamer magazine described FX Fighter as "ground-breaking." And we're grateful. But to be honest, with all that power sitting on the desktop, we just felt that the last thing the world needed was another damn word-processor.

Flying 3D Camera. Not just a highlight film, the point-of-view changes as you attack.



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GTE Entertainment

E* Saturn: Sega's surprise launch/**p.17** • **E* PlayStation:** \$299 on September 9/**p.18** • **E* 3DO:** Trip's 64-bit spoiler/**p.19** • **E* Jaguar:** The great VR scandal/**p.20** • **E* Ultra 64:** Nintendo's 64-bit flagship delayed until 1996/**p.21** • **E* PC:** GTE's *FX Fighter* resurfaces/**p.22** • **Virtual Reality:** Hasbro's "Toaster"/**p.24** • **Intel:** the RISC P6/**p.27**



International videogaming news

E³ The greatest show on earth

The Electronic Entertainment Exposition (aka E³) took place in LA, May 11 to 13. NEXT Generation reports back from the front line

Los Angeles, 9 am, Wednesday, May 10: Staff in Toys R Us, Babbages, Electronics Boutique, and Software Etc., start stacking Saturn boxes on shelves: By defying its own September 2 launch date, Sega is firing the first live shell in the 1995 US videogame war.

At 5:30 pm: Steve Race, Sony Computer Entertainment's President, "officially" unveils PlayStation to the US press. Race announces a release date of September 9, on the next day he confirms that it will cost \$299.

At 7:30 pm: Just two hours later,



By defying its own September 2 launch date, Sega fires the first live shell in the 1995 US videogame wars



The mood at E³ remained optimistic, when many observers had predicted a 32-bit anticlimax



and half a mile away, Trip Hawkins of The 3DO Company shows off M2 to a crammed conference hall of gaming journalists, developers, and software publishers. At the same time, Nintendo throws a cocktail party for 3,000 people.

And all this occurs before the Electronic Entertainment Exposition (E³) has even officially opened its doors.

It was the largest videogame show ever, and every major player on the world videogame stage met to cement deals, scout out the competition, and show off. There were some great new games showcased — Delphine's *Crossfire*; Bullfrog's *High Octane*; Psygnosis' *Wipeout* and *Destruction Derby*; Nintendo's *Killer Instinct*; Sony Imagesoft's *Twisted Metal*; and Sega's *VectorMan* are NEXT Generation's picks of the show.

What E³ means to each of the next generation systems is profiled over the next six pages.



Booths at all trade shows range from the sublime to the ridiculous. Acllain's "Bat" Booth featured a tribe of catwomen...



Retailers use E³ to calculate their holiday season orders — so the pressure's on to impress

breaking

Saturn

Sega's 32-bit system launches early, surprising gamers, the press and (most importantly) Sony



The best kept secret of E³ became common knowledge on the morning of Thursday, May 11. Tom Kalinske, president and CEO of Sega of America, gleefully announced to an astounded conference that the Saturday September 2 launch was a decoy, and that "We [Sega] started our roll out yesterday; we're at 1,800 stores around the US and Canada today."



Virtua Cop was promoted as a hot title, with a view to making the Saturn version a hit in the fall

NEXT Generation had learned of Sega's Saturn plans a week before the conference (too late to make it into last month's issue). Sony had seemingly learned of its competitors surprise move merely hours before its own "official unveiling" of PlayStation (a shaken Steve

Race refused to admit that Sega had gained an edge over Sony, but admitted that he was "ecstatic" about the delay of Ultra 64). And joyous gamers stumbled upon Saturns by accident.

At \$449 (with *Virtua Fighter*) and \$399 for a standalone unit, the retail price is as expected. **NEXT Generation** has learned that the retail chains carrying the Saturn are making



Virtua Fighter has been refined for its US launch, removing many of the original's glitches

Six Saturn games available at launch



Virtua Fighter, Daytona USA, Clockwork Knight, Worldwide Soccer, Pebble Beach Golf Links, and Panzer Dragoon (clockwise from top left) make up Saturn's launch lineup. Imminent releases include Bug!, NHL All-Star Hockey, Virtua Cop, NBA Action, 3D Baseball, BlackFire, and Virtua Racing

no profit on the hardware (buying them from Sega direct at \$399), and are instead aiming to make a profit on the six games available at launch. While this news makes a future price drop unlikely, the addition of extra bundled games may be Sega's answer to PlayStation's \$299 September launch.

Sega had little exciting new Saturn software on display — and proud new Saturn owners shouldn't expect too many new games in the near future. Instead Sega relied on *Sega Rally*, an eight-player arcade *Daytona USA* link-up, and the shock factor of Saturn's launch to make an impression. The 32X, gasping for a life-giving injection of decent software, was left to suffocate while the Genesis looks set to benefit from a sharp *Earthworm Jim*-inspired platformer called *Vector Man* arriving at stores closer to the holiday season.

In essence: Sega 1, Sony 0, but this is the first round. More next month on the full Saturn story.

ng

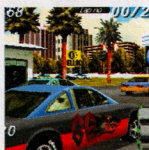
breaking E

PlayStation

Sony's hotly-tipped next generation console will cost \$299 (with no game) at its September 9 US debut



Show stoppers



Wipeout and Destruction Derby from Psygnosis, and *Twisted Metal* and *ESPN Extreme* from Sony Imagesoft (top to bottom) grabbed the most attention for Sony

E's Sony Computer Entertainment's (SCE) first US trade show, and the company spent a rumored \$4 million on ensuring that its "booth" (if such a monstrosity could be called booth) sent a strong enough message to its competitors. PlayStation demonstration set-ups dominated the floor of Sony's empire, offering hands-on tastes of upcoming PlayStation titles including *Wipeout* (see page 46) and *Mortal Kombat III* (disappointing).

It's ironic that Sony — the company most expected at E' to be relying on corporate hype to mask concrete plans, and smoke and mirrors to disguise a lack of software — was perhaps the most upfront and honest of the "big three." While Nintendo insisted that the conspicuous absence of Ultra 64 didn't detract (and almost succeeded) from its show lineup and Sega rode the wave of E's hottest news, SCE quietly got on with the business of rolling out its plans and showing off its games. Having said that, arranging for pop star Michael Jackson to show up at its movie studio PlayStation party was too much to resist.

Namco expressed disappointment (and not just a little surprise) at SCE's decision to sell PlayStation without a

bundled game (*Ridge Racer* had been assumed to be in the bag — literally). Sony's Steve Race spectacularly failed to dodge a curve ball thrown in the form of a question concerning Sam Tramiel's interpretation of Sony and the ITC's pricing laws (see page 6) at Sony's press reception. *Tekken* was a huge hit (console for Namco), Sony Imagesoft displayed some encouraging internally-developed games (especially *ESPN Extreme*, *Twisted Metal*, and *WarHawk*), and Psygnosis stole the show with *Destruction Derby* (recently renamed, see page 59).

A mature, solid showing from the new kids on the block.



Arranging for pop star Michael Jackson to show up at its PlayStation party was too much for Sony to resist



For many gamers, E' provided the first hands-on PlayStation experience. *Ridge Racer* and *Toh Shin Den* — old titles in Japan — gathered a new audience of fans awaiting the September 9 launch

breaking

3DO

The setting — 3DO at E³: In which Trip Hawkins ensures that M2 is the worst kept secret in videogames



Got \$22,000 burning a hole in your pocket? The 3DO X-O-TRON VR could be just the thing for you

With no news of a significant price cut for the basic 3DO unit (other than Goldstar's token \$50 rebate on a \$399 purchase), Trip Hawkins and The 3DO Company diverted attention to M2, its next generation product. As revealed in **NG 6**, M2 is a RISC 64-bit, 602 PowerPC-based gaming system (reportedly capable of generating 700,000 texture-mapped polygons per second).

But with no concrete announcement of either price or release date (not even ballpark estimates), 3DO's promises for the future have to be seen as little but a spoiling tactic to place a drag on PlayStation and Saturn sales. Ironically,



3DO showed early casings for its 64-bit M2 accelerator. The plug-in adapter for existing 3DO players (above) and a stand alone unit (right)



the perennial "Just-wait-until-next-year" whispers would seem to have switched from being 3DO's enemy in 1994 to ally in 1995.

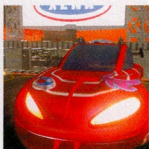
In the absence of any real news, new 3DO peripherals stole a disproportionate amount of attention. With prices starting at \$22,000 (yes, \$22,000) the X-O-TRON VR is probably out of the reach of all but the most diehard game fans, but offers a unique form of "exercise and entertainment" for health clubs or amusement parks. Three gyroscope-style hoops independently rotate a player suspended inside the contraption and are hooked up to a 3DO game, complete with stereoscopic headset. And those who would argue that under Sega's business model, the X-O-TRON, could have been brought to market at just \$29.99 are to be dismissed as mere cynics...

Giving testament to the fact that the 3DO business has come of age, if not actually booming, are: a three-button mouse from Panasonic (July, \$39.95); a new FZ-10 controller (\$29.95); the Storage Expander from TDK which enables up to eight games to be saved on one memory card (out now, under \$100); the GameGun light gun from American Laser Games

(August, \$59.95); a six-button, infrared, remote-controlled joystick from Fire International (\$49.95); a new 3DO Control Pad 2, to be bundled with *Zhadrnost: The People's Party* (out now); and — finally — an MPEG Module from Goldstar (\$199.99 bundled with *Total Recall*, out now).

As for new software, some game heroes are born great, some game heroes have greatness thrust upon them. Is Gex the lizard for the job? Only time will tell. **ng**

M2: The Demo



3DO claims that this demo emulates M2's ability to render graphics like these on the fly

breaking

E Jaguar



Atari's Jaguar VR system debuts — but is this the real deal?

Jaguar VR: tech specs

HMD (Head Mounted Display)

- Less than 1 pound in weight
- Compatible with or without glasses
- Built in microphone
- Two DOF (Degrees of Freedom) tracking
- Stereo Sound, featuring 3D spatialized sound system
- 52° (horizontal) x 40° (vertical) field of view
- Single 0.7" TFT active matrix color LCD containing 104,000 pixels

Optical System

- Custom designed pupil projection with aspheric acrylic lenses, beam splitters, mirrors, and thin film coatings
- Exit pupil size 5mm x 14mm
- Compatible with interpupillary distances of between 45 mm and 70 mm [NG Jargon watch: this refers to "how far apart your eyes are"]

Focus Adjustment

- None

Tracking System

- "V-Track" @ 250Hz sample rate, 4 milliseconds lagtime

Optional Joystick

- 2 to 6 degrees of freedom
- or, standard Jaguar control pad can be used

Target Price

- \$300

Games available at launch

- Missile Command
- Zone Hunter

While the single most important news from Atari is the cut in price of the Jaguar system to a SRP of \$149.95, and the fact that the Jaguar CD-ROM Player may actually reach the stores soon, the Jaguar Virtual Reality demonstrations led Atari's assault on the hearts and minds of E³-attendees.

The Jaguar VR, being developed in conjunction with Virtuality, a world leader in commercial VR technology, is targeted for release this fall. Many informed observers of the VR scene doubted that Atari would be able to produce a VR set-up — in the true sense of the concept — at a \$300 price. And E³ provided no proof that Atari is near achieving this goal.

Although the steady flow of conference delegates who "had a go" at an "early working demonstration" of Jaguar VR came away exceedingly impressed, NEXT Generation has learned the system being demonstrated was nothing other than Virtuality's own arcade system disguised as Jaguar VR. A wolf in sheep's clothing, indeed, and reminiscent of 3DO's early attempts to fool CES (Consumer Electronic Show) into believing that a Macintosh demo was in fact the real REAL 3DO.

On the software side, *Fight For Life* looks much improved but the continued lack of any real third party support still leaves gaping holes in Jaguar's credibility as a mainstream



contender (we'll have to see how the \$150 price and CD-ROM player improves sales).

Although Atari is confident that there will be as many as 100 Jaguar titles in existence before the end of 1995, the quality of these games still has to be questioned. Perhaps Atari is focused too narrowly on numbers (do the math) and not on quality. Having said all of that, however, Jeff Minter's *Defender 2000* is a game that has to be looked forward to by

gamers of all shapes and sizes. Even staff from the Sega and Sony booths were anxious to grab a second slice of gaming's history.

Jaguar VR — Atari claims it will have a \$300 home unit on sale for this year's holiday season



The combined cost of a CD-based Jaguar is \$300, the same price as the \$299 PlayStation, but cheaper than Sega's \$399 Saturn. Will this be enough of an incentive to boost Jaguar's sales?

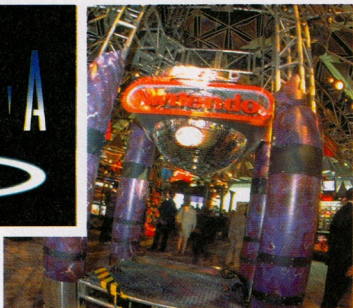
breaking

Ultra 64

Delayed until April 1996, Nintendo's 64-bit collaboration with Silicon Graphics waits in the wings. Again



A shiny Ultra 64 logo simply made the lack of the real Ultra 64 all the more disappointing



The Silicon Graphics team, regular guests at Nintendo's sprawling show booths, since the announcement of the SGI/Nintendo "Project Reality" collaboration in 1993, were the most obviously disappointed at the news of Ultra 64's delay.

The official line? "We've decided to give our software developers additional time to maximize the power of this system in their game creation," said Nintendo of America's chairman Howard Lincoln. The real reason? No one's entirely sure. Software delays could well account for the lag, but with *Killer Instinct* and *Cruis'n 'n' USA* presumably completed months ago, and a brace of "dream team" third party products in the pipeline, a 1995 launch should at least be possible — if not ideal. Indeed, Mr. Yamauchi, President of Nintendo Corporate Ltd (NCL) Japan, hinted that Ultra 64 may still launch on December 1 in Tokyo.

There's only one addition to the list of official Ultra 64 game developers (MindScape, who will be developing *Monster Dunk* — a

basketball game featuring Dracula and King Kong). In fact, for Ultra 64, it would seem to be business as usual. Except, of course, it's not actually here yet.

What was revealed was a picture of the finished unit, complete with four joystick ports and a memory

expansion port. Nintendo promised something revolutionary in terms of game controllers, observing that the SNES joystick is designed for moving characters around a 2D environment, and that Ultra 64 is designed specifically as a 3D world generator.

Virtual Boy was there, of course, and seemed to thoroughly impress everybody who's never actually played a videogame before (everyone else was playing SNES *Killer Instinct* and *Donkey Kong Country 2*). Virtual Boy will be released on August 14, priced at \$179.95. "Virtual Boy is unlike anything currently available for the home," says Nintendo's Peter Main. And we have to agree with him.

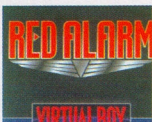
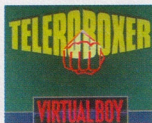
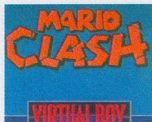
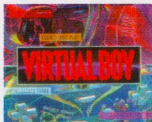
Super 16-bit



Rare's *Donkey Kong Country 2* and *Killer Instinct* for SNES prove that there's plenty of life left in the 16-bit industry



Virtual Boy proved to be a poor substitute for Ultra 64. Instead, it was Nintendo's 16-bit titles that wowed the crowds. Virtual Boy will launch with six titles in August



breaking E PC

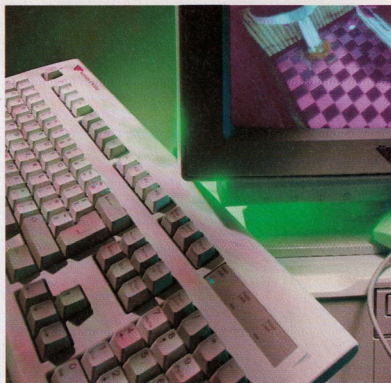
Though the dim fog of vaporware, a few bright lights guide the growing PC market

Unlike their videogame cousins, PC developers aren't known for making earth-shattering product announcements at trade shows. The bulk of "new" products at E³ consisted mostly of titles shown at the last big US trade show — WCES. Yet, despite an abundance of familiar (if unavailable) games like *Harvester*, *Falcon 4.0*, and *ST-TNG A Final Unity* lurking in nearly every booth, there were a few innovative new games that may actually see the light of day.

Though the lineup at Bullfrog came as no surprise to anyone, the latest builds of *Magic Carpet II: Netherworlds*, *Syndicate Wars*, *High Octane*, and *Creation* show why Peter Molyneux and Co. are a force to be reckoned with. EA's other partner — Origin — provided its own unique brand of titillation with the high-voltage action of the comic book-inspired shooter *Cybermage*, as well as the science-fiction action/adventure *Crusader: No Remorse*.

Bethesda Softworks,

For *No Remorse*, Origin reworked the *Ultima VIII* engine for a truly unique action game (inset). The familiar *Doom*-style interface takes an intriguing turn as Origin puts the final touches on the comic-book inspired *Cybermage* (below)



though still hard at work on its role-playing tour-de-force *The Elder Scrolls: Daggerfall*, found time to put together a pre-alpha of its stunning SVGA space-combat simulation *The 10th Planet*, which could be the best of the genre.

The promise of a true arcade-style fighting game may finally come true with GTE Interactive's *FX Fighter*. Though still far from completion, *FX Fighter* delivers the same smooth quality gameplay and choice moves you'd expect from a coin-op.

To cap it off, SSI's new sub sim, *Silent Hunter*, promises to redefine the entire sub-sim genre with high-res graphics and challenging missions in a user friendly package that is actually fun to play.

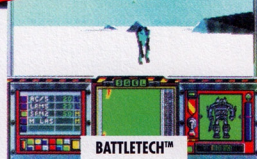
ng

Some companies will go to any length to get noticed (top). The designers admitted they'd only worked on the pre-alpha of *The 10th Planet* for five weeks. Give them a year and watch all other space sims bite the dust (above)

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breaking

Home VR: Hasbro

turns up the heat

Hasbro's "Toaster" hardware could revolutionize the home VR market

For 20 years there has been strong antipathy between traditional toy manufacturers and the videogame sector, with toy firms dismissing videogames as a "passing fad"

While Sony, Sega, Nintendo, and 3DO have been busy incubating their respective consoles, a giant American toy corporation has been quietly hatching its own plans for the future of interactive entertainment. It is already common knowledge that Hasbro, one of the world's largest toy manufacturers, is working on a virtual reality system. **NEXT Generation** has now learned that the machine, codenamed "Toaster," will be a set-top box with performance comparable to the Ultra 64; that it will use Argonaut's BRender as system software; and that it is scheduled to appear in the first half of 1996 at a mass market price.

Toaster will be based on a new custom RISC chip, designed with an emphasis on fast graphics, running the 3D API BRender. BRender's advantage over its main rivals, RenderWare and Reality Lab, is that its footprint (the amount of RAM the OS takes up) is claimed to be just 100 K. "BRender has been designed from the outset to fit into as little memory as possible," Argonaut boss Jez San told our reporters last year. "No one wants to pay to download a large OS time and time again." This has led to speculation that BRender was designed specifically for use in set-top boxes — a rumor Argonaut is reluctant to deny.

Toaster is currently a piece of emulation software running on an SGI Onyx-based development system. All the BRender OS functions are available but there's no Toaster C compiler at the moment (a chip-specific compiler is necessary to produce highly optimized code). Although the development system costs around \$180,000, the high price doesn't seem to have deterred either Hasbro or many prominent developers.

"You'd be surprised to learn how many companies are involved even at this early stage," one insider told **NEXT Generation**. Microprose, Virgin

Interactive Entertainment, Electronic Arts, and Argonaut are all said to have development systems, and presumably Hasbro has recruited an in-house team.

Ultimately, the success of any VR system depends on the quality of the headset. The development system uses the \$3,000 KaiserOptics VIM 500 unit, but given Hasbro's long lead time and the rate of technological advance in the VR field, there's no reason why the final unit shouldn't be able to offer even better-quality visuals and more accurate head tracking by the time it goes on sale. Although it would be possible to mass produce the VIM for around \$200 (it is "potentially inexpensive and of high performance"), **NEXT Generation** understands that the final headset will not be derived from the VIM. (Apparently, the headset will be detachable, although the connection will be hardwired into the machine.)

The factor most likely to inspire confidence in Hasbro's system is the name behind the hardware design. David Sarnoff's pioneering David Sarnoff Research Center, based in


HASBRO

Toys "VR" us: Hasbro has been a major force in the toy industry for decades, but the Toaster project is its first foray into the videogame market



KaiserOptics' Vision Immersion 1000, the larger brother of the VIM 500 used in Hasbro's Onyx-based development kit. The final system is reported to feature a headset with a built-in microphone



The David Sarnoff Research Center in Princeton, New Jersey, is one of the world's leading R&D facilities



Pyramid Processing

The Pyramid (PYR) chip (above) is a product of Sarnoff's research into high-speed image processing. The result is a technique called Pyramid Image Processing — "a mathematical image-processing technique that dramatically reduces the computational intensity of computer-based image analysis algorithms."

Sarnoff claims when complemented by commercial CPUs and DSPs, the PYR can perform a wide range of real-time image-processing applications formerly impossible or too expensive.

While the PYR may not actually be used in Toaster, it shows that Sarnoff is well advanced in the motion-detection, target-tracking, and image-alignment technology on which the system will depend.

Princeton, New Jersey, has a formidable list of inventions to its credit, including the NTSC color TV standard, liquid crystal and, more recently, DirecTV — a new 150-channel MPEG-based satellite TV system. Some of the more current research interests encompass image processing and motion tracking.

In addition, Abraham's Gentle Entertainment (AGE), which has close links with Sarnoff, is known to be involved with Toaster. NES devotees may remember the company's Powerglove, a novelty controller which failed due to lack of software support. AGE is now working on a new Powerglove, presumably to complement the Hasbro unit.

The system is also thought to incorporate headset-mounted microphones and a link-up ability. Many pundits are already excited about its potential. "It's going to be a very good-quality machine with a great many nice little features," predicted one of our sources.

Set-top boxes

are regarded by some as the direction in which videogames should be heading — they offer the convenience of games on demand as well as the potential for large-scale multiplayer gaming. A smart card will be used to decode programs which are held on a central file server, and to record the amount of time spent using them. Programs will be loaded into the machine's onboard RAM and then played from the box itself.

Hasbro will almost certainly use its own distribution channels for the product, but it will be interesting to see what marketing strategy it adopts. For more than 20 years there has been strong antipathy between traditional toy manufacturers and the videogame sector, with toy firms dismissing videogames as a "passing fad." It's

only recently they've realized there are huge profits to be made there.

With a projected price of \$200 to \$300, the machine could make a substantial impact, especially in the heavily-cabled US. But its long-term success depends on Hasbro's commitment. Home VR has been an elusive goal for some time, and whether a nonvideogame company like Hasbro can see it through is open to question — other firms which have dabbled in the gaming industry without any experience in it have found the going tough.

So far, Hasbro is keeping its plans strictly under wraps. When our reporters contacted the company at its New York office, only the following statement was forthcoming: "As one of the largest toy corporations in the world, Hasbro's activities are always the subject of much speculation. Hasbro do not comment on a subject until it has been officially announced." The connection was then abruptly terminated at Hasbro's end.

NEXT Generation is working on the complete virtual reality story for a future issue. But it looks like — for the moment at least — that the reconciliation between the toy and videogame businesses still has some way to go.



Talent Wanted

NEXT Generation is looking for a writer to join its team.

NEXT Generation sets high standards and only the very best need apply. Relevant qualifications are useful, but we'll happily consider a vastly motivated, undiscovered talent — just prove to us that you're the person for the job. We need someone who eats, sleeps, and breathes games; someone who can address themselves equally to a genre-busting fighting game or the next generation of rendering hardware; someone who knows why *Super Mario Bros 3* on the NES is a better game than *Donkey Kong Country* on the SNES (or someone who can convince us otherwise); someone who can handle the immense pressure of both tight deadlines and our ambition level for the magazine.

An insider's knowledge of the gaming industry is also useful for this full-time position in San Francisco, CA. The hours are long and hard, but the rewards immeasurable — **NEXT Generation** is already the most highly regarded and sought after magazine in its field. Send your resume and a 500 word review of a next generation game to:

Neil West, Editor

NEXT Generation

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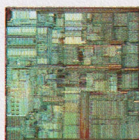
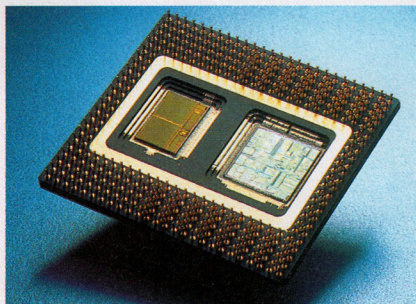
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Microsoft

WHERE DO YOU WANT TO GO TODAY?

Intel chip "twice as fast as Pentium"

PC performance continues to improve at a dramatic rate



The L2 cache is a 256 K SRAM package on the same chip as the CPU. The CPU has 5.5 million transistors, but the cache requires 15.5 million to avoid refreshing every 70 ns

The P6 is Intel's first RISC/CISC hybrid chip. The increased power is made possible by a process called dynamic execution

Intel, the world's largest chip manufacturer, has revealed details of its successor to the Pentium. Named P6, it's a CISC/RISC hybrid designed to break free from the performance limitations of the 17-year-old X86 PC architecture while maintaining backward compatibility. It's hoped that the new architecture, combined with a revolutionary on-chip secondary cache, will double PC performance by the end of the year.

The first version of the 5.5-million-transistor P6 will run at 133 MHz and is claimed to be roughly twice as fast as a 100 MHz Pentium. This performance increase is the result of Intel's research in a variety of fields. "Some of the new technologies were proven in mainframe computers, some proposed in academia, and some we innovated ourselves," an Intel spokesperson explained. "These were carefully interwoven, modified, enhanced, tuned, and implemented to produce the P6 microprocessor."

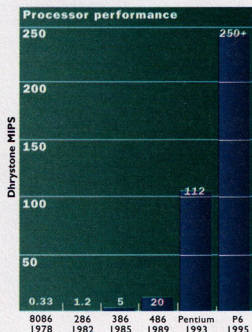
One of P6's most significant innovations is something called dynamic execution, whereby the chip looks ahead in the software it is

running and predicts the next instructions that will be required; they are then optimized and fed to the processor before they're requested.

This system operates in conjunction with a 256 K on-chip cache of super-fast SRAM. The advantage of combining cache and CPU on one chip is that they share a dedicated bus and therefore operate at the same speed (in this case 133 MHz). The disadvantage for Intel is that MCMs (Multi Chip Modules) are expensive to manufacture — although they will lead to lower development costs for clone makers.

The P6 announcement comes as Intel attempts to restore public confidence following the PR debacle of the "bugged" Pentium. And with rival chip makers AMD, Cyrix, and NexGen now making progress, Intel could soon find itself without the effective monopoly it's enjoyed since the introduction of the PC in 1981.

It's doubtful whether either of these factors will erode Intel's domination of the PC market in the foreseeable future, but its share could be significantly reduced.



It's humbling to think that people once worked on machines as slow as the 8086. PC processor performance has risen 750-fold in a mere 17 years

New Pentium

To coincide with the unveiling of the P6, Intel has launched its new 120 MHz Pentium processor, the first mass-produced chip to be manufactured using 0.35μ technology. Intel claims that this "will allow the Pentium processor die to shrink to half its current size, which translates into higher performance, higher reliability, and lower cost products for computer users in the future." The chip itself costs a mere \$935 in 1,000 piece quantities.

Intel is currently pushing the 100 MHz model as the next standard for multimedia PCs. Later this year, it will debut the 150 MHz version, after which it is expected to concentrate on the P6.

breaking

JOYRIDING

Gaming on the Internet

Getting on to the Internet seems to be the thing to do, and judging by the big commercial on-line services' efforts to provide full Internet access, it is. In prior columns, I've touched a little on what the Internet is — here's what it isn't. It isn't any one computer, not one service; no one controls the Net, yet, and no one organization runs it. It has its own subculture of slang and expression. The Internet began life as a series of academic and research computers linked to one another in a massive network. And it has only grown since then. The Net has become international, reaching academic institutions, corporations, and noncommercial systems. The big issue for getting on the Net and access to its services like e-mail, newsgroups, and the World Wide Web, is finding a service provider. If you're in college, chances are you already have access to the Net. But for most private individuals, you'll need an Internet access provider.

Subscribers to America On-Line and CompuServe should have full Internet access by the time you read this, in addition to the excellent private (not accessible through the Net) content of those commercial services. But other online companies specialize in Internet access. One of these companies has been providing a GUI (graphical user interface) point-and-click interface for the Net for much longer than the commercial services, and adding their own content as well. Pipeline, who's software and services have won industry awards, is taking its act on the road.

Primarily a New York metropolitan area Net provider, Pipeline has always been one of the easiest ways for New Yorkers to log onto the Net through their Internaut front-end software and 28.8 K access lines. As the song goes, if you can make it here, you can make it anywhere; Pipeline has since been acquired by Performance Systems International

(PSINet), a national Internet provider. That means that Pipeline will be available around the country for the first time without expensive SprintNet access charges. PSINet maintains 100 access numbers around the country, due to double by the end of the year. And PSINet will use Pipeline's Internaut software for the Mac and Windows to provide point-and-click access without making users learn the arcane operating system language UNIX, the Internet's native tongue.

Pipeline New York subscribers (and there are about 13,000) have enjoyed extra content: point-and-click access to local news, weather, shopping, access to menus of local eateries, and even access to the card catalog at the New York Public Library. All users will have access to shareware ftp (file transfer protocol) sites and online help on obscure-sounding features like gopher, Jughead, and Veronica (tools that search the Internet). Of course, access to Usenet newsgroups, or bulletin boards where users discuss certain topics, is available from alt.fan.rush-limbaugh to alt.sex.exhibitionism. Of course, Pipeline's non-New York subscribers probably don't care what's playing down at the Bottom Line on Friday nights, so local-oriented coverage is omitted. But Pipeline members can access to the World Wide Web, a graphic, hypertext-linked feature that downloads images and cross-links related topics on your desktop.

And why should gamers care? Well, Net veterans have been downloading shareware games like *Descent* and *Rise of the Triad*, exchanging DoomWADs, sharing hints on how to rout aliens in XCOM and spank kitties in *Wing Commander III*. Usenet newsgroups, like the ones published in my other columns, are full of content on games and game design. Though

Bernard Yee has contributed to *USA Today* and writes regularly for *PC Gamer*, *PC Magazine*, and has authored several books on gaming



by Bernard Yee

other commercial services provide Net access, their hourly charges can get very expensive, and reading through hundreds of threads on subjects of interest — like modern air combat flight simulators — can be mesmerizing and time consuming. Pipeline USA was free at the end of May. Now, users can pay a flat fee of \$19.95 per month for full Internet access and unlimited e-mail. Of course, the World Wide Web and all other Internet resources are online. Pipeline NYC offers a pay-as-you-go plan of \$9.95 per month which will provide users with five free hours of usage time and will charge \$2.50 for each additional hour. As always, life in Manhattan is more expensive; Pipeline USA's pay as you go is only \$5 for five hours, \$1.50/hour thereafter. Unlike other access services (like Panix), Pipeline offers free GUI software. Unlike the major online services, Pipeline offers 28.8 K modem lines (definitely necessary when cruising the Web), full Net access, and a flat fee for as much Internet time as you like.

But do me a favor, before you log on, read up on *Netiquette* (a guide to Internet protocol and behavior) before you post (place a message on a newsgroup), and I get flamed (insulted, chastised) for encouraging more newbies (Net novices) onto the Net.

Cool Cyberspace Gadget of the Month: Xircum Ethernet+Modem Adapter. This little PCMCIA card does your network and modem gaming a huge service by combining it all on one card. Take *Rise of the Triad* to your buddy's house on your notebook, or play MultiPlayer *BattleTech* from a hotel room. Just make sure your phone line is not a digital one...

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Saturn plays catch-up

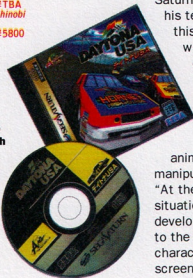
Sega Japan tries to recapture the glory days of *Virtua Fighter*

Release schedule

A selection of the 23 Saturn games scheduled for release in Japan, up to the end of June 1995.

April 28	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Virtual Hydlife (Sega) ¥5800 Crystal Legend Asari (Sega) ¥5800 Ultimate Paradise (Konami) ¥5800
May 19	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Professional Baseball (Sega) ¥5800 Grand Chaser (Sega) ¥5800 Time Space Detective (ASCII) ¥6800
May 26	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Battle Monsters (Naxos) ¥5800 Pinball Arena (Kai) ¥115A Blue Seed (Sega) ¥115A New Shinobi Legend (Sega) ¥5800
June	

Daytona USA failed to provide Saturn sales with the boost needed to continue the pace set in Japan by *Virtua Fighter*



The Saturn version of *Virtua Fighter 2* (above) is shaping up for a late '95 release

Sega Japan recently clarified its 1995 strategy for the Saturn with a press conference aimed at rebuilding faith in its 32-bit console. Although Saturn's Japanese sales were aggressive at launch (solely because of *Virtua Fighter*), concern has grown about the system's prognosis — particularly since the *Daytona USA* coin-op-to-Saturn conversion generally received a less than ecstatic welcome in the gaming press.

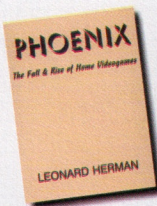
After a dubious prediction that the Saturn would enjoy sales of 2.6 million units in its first year, AM2's head designer Yu Suzuki took the stage. He explained the current software development circumstances and unveiled a trial version of a new Saturn OS developed by his team. Running under this preliminary system was a demonstration of the upcoming conversion of *Virtua Fighter 2*, which

generated a smoothly animated fighter, manipulated by a joystick. "At the moment, the situation is that we've developed two characters to the same quality as the character seen on the screen," enthused Suzuki, pointing to a massive video display. "If we transplant everything to this quality, the game will be perfect." *Virtua Fighter 2*, with its mainly flat Mode 7-style arenas, should fare better on the Saturn than *Daytona USA* did, but it will take more than another (admittedly great) polygon fighter to take Saturn into the lead outside its homeland.



Essential reading

Phoenix: The Rise and Fall of Home Videogames



Leonard Herman
Publisher: Rolenta Press
Release Date: Available now
296 pages

Although the title refers to itself due to the decline and rise of videogames as they descended and then ascended from the ashes of themselves, *Phoenix, The Rise and Fall of Home Videogames* is not just a self-referential title. In fact, it seems that Leonard Herman recreated this book,

which he originally intended as a history of Atari, into a chronicle of today's incestuous, lawsuit-ridden, and otherwise extraordinary videogame, computer, and coin-op industry.

While *Game Over*, David Sheff's book, built a historical tapestry around Nintendo, Herman weaves strong fact and solid story telling around Atari's behind-the-scenes deals, legal wranglings, successes, failures, and the people and games that made the company what it is today. Straightforward writing peppered with humor and chock full of technical information continue onward from Atari to tell the stories of Mattel, Milton Bradley, Magnavox, Nintendo, Sega, 3DO, NEC, Sony, videogame magazines, and the explosion of a developing new entertainment industry.

Few, if any, game consoles are left out of this self-published history book, and particular consideration is given to 8-bit and 16-bit games, hand-held games, and coin-ops, although it is unfortunate that less concentration is directed toward VR, 32-bit consoles, and multimedia, considering the market's focus these days. But Herman could always follow up with *Phoenix Part II...*

All in all, *Phoenix* can be counted on as a colorful, sharp, and concise reference book for anyone, whether they're insiders or new to the industry, who desire to plumb the origins (the "genesis," if you will) of the gaming industry. Thumbs up, Herman.

Konami takes Namco route

Konami has finished development of its new PlayStation-based coin-op board, following the signing of a technology licensing agreement with Sony.

The as-yet-unnamed system mirrors Namco's System 11 project, which uses the PlayStation's GPU along with its own custom sound-generation hardware. The chief advantage of such an arrangement lies in the ease of conversion of tried-and-tested coin-op material

to the compatible home system.

After a relatively quiet spell in the arcades, Konami looks likely to up its output, exploiting the polygon power offered by the chipset to push into 3D territory. The Kobe-based games giant has announced development of three titles, one of which is rumored to be a 3D installment of its *Gradius* series and all of which are scheduled to be released on the PlayStation proper shortly after their arcade airings.

breaking

Arcadia

A news analysis from a key insider on how home videogames affect the international coin-op industry



Marcus Webb is the editor-in-chief of *RePlay* magazine, the US' leading trade amusement magazine

by Marcus Webb

Missing: \$7 billion

Videogame lovers may not realize it, but they're sitting in the eye of an economic hurricane these days as videogame manufacturers compete for their loyalty. Sure, you know that in the arcades Midway wants you to drop your quarters into *Mortal Kombat 3*, while Capcom wants you to blow your budget on *Street Fighter: The Movie*, but such competition for your entertainment dollar

represents only the leading edge of this financial storm.

For starters, in a certain sense, each manufacturer is in competition with itself. Why? Because when a hit arcade game is released to the home, arcade earnings usually drop sharply and immediately — lessening the value of the arcade game.

So the more money factories make in the home market, the fewer units they may sell to arcades. Paradoxically, they're competing with themselves!

But how does all this affect you, the arcade game player? For one thing, you're seeing fewer and fewer coin-op videos in the US arcades today. Thanks to competition from the home market, even the hits don't sell in anything like the quantity they used to. Fifteen years ago (back when there was no such thing as a home video system), hit games in the basic upright configuration — like *Pac-Man* and *Asteroids* — sold more than 100,000 units each to US arcades. By the early 1990s, with Nintendo leading a major revival of the home videogame systems, top fighting games were down to 25,000 units or so (per title) sold to arcades and street locations.

Finally, as of this year with home systems more powerful and pervasive than ever, factories are hitting a ceiling of 7,000 unit sales for a major hit. (MK3 could prove the exception, but as of this writing it's too soon to tell.) In sum, coin-op buying volume has suffered a long-term decline.

This intra-industry competition mystifies many experts. When the movie industry began releasing films to the home VCR market, it didn't hurt box office sales. In fact, thanks to VCRs, movie studios basically doubled their bottom line from \$10 billion to \$20 billion per year. Why hasn't the videogame industry enjoyed the same profit increase from expanding into the home market? "We are missing \$7 billion," according to 3DO President Trip Hawkins.

So around 1990, many of the leading Japanese videogame manufacturers — Sega, Namco, Data East, Taito, Jaleco, and Konami — decided to offer arcade fans something they couldn't get at home. They began producing a series of ever-larger, ever-more-lavish sit-down video simulators. Driving games. Flying games. Shooting games. Driving and flying, flying and shooting, and so on.

Nice idea. Nice delivery, too; the new generation of simulations offered excellent 3D polygons, texture-mapped graphics, and mindblowing fun. But Japan's "Big Game Program" basically flopped because US arcades choked on the price tag — up to \$20,000 for a top-quality driving simulator using advanced computer graphics or maybe a motion-based platform. Arcades still refuse to buy more than about 2,000 units (at most) of any one title of these ultra-expensive simulators. Coin-op sales remained stuck.

So now Japan, Inc. has gone back to the drawing board, trying — once again — to figure out how to solve the problem. Strategy number two: use the same basic platform (hardware and much of the software) for sales to the big arcades, smaller arcades, street locations, and home. This is a major departure from the old days, when releasing an arcade hit to the home meant extensively reprogramming the software to translate the game to a very different (and much less powerful) consumer platform.

In 1995, as the 32-bit home systems era begins, manufacturers like Sega, Namco, and Nintendo/Midway plan to use the same basic technology as it evolves through a series of markets. A game may begin life as a huge \$20,000 arcade simulator, and end its career as a \$60 cartridge for an advanced 32-bit home video system. Somewhere in the middle of the game's life cycle, it will be sold as a relatively inexpensive (\$1,000 to \$5,000) software update to average US arcades. Examples of this strategy include Namco's *Tekken*; Sega's *Daytona USA* and *Virtua Fighter 2*, as well as Nintendo/Midway's *Killer Instinct*.

We'll have to wait and see if this strategy actually results in more videogames flowing into the arcades. Meanwhile, two US manufacturers have unveiled strategy number three: chip updates. Atari Games (now called Time Warner Interactive) provided arcades with new chips to freshen up gameplay of its dinosaur combat game *Primal Rage*. And when MK3 is released to the home in late summer or early fall of this year, Midway Manufacturing plans to flood the arcades with new chips to add a substantial number of new characters and gameplay to the coin-op version.

Midway hopes its planned update will lure you back to the arcades, even while you're buying and playing the original version of MK3 at home. If their tactic succeeds, the home and arcade markets could actually reinforce each other, instead of robbing from each other — and manufacturers might just have found the key to that missing \$7 billion.

Now if manufacturers can just figure out how to keep the arcades buying coin-op videos, while the exact same games are hurtling down the information superhighway.



Sega's *Daytona USA* has made truckloads of money in arcades, but US arcades still basically refuse to buy more than 2,000 units of each such costly simulator



Back in 1980, games like *Pac-Man* and *Asteroids* sold more than 100,000 units to US arcades and street locations. There was no such thing as competition from home video then

Generator

by Mark James Ramshaw



Welcome once again to the column that accesses all areas of the videogame development community

A disappointment to many, the butt of industry jokes to some, a prized console system to few — the 3D0 hasn't been the most successful of the new formats by a long shot, but it was out there well before the likes of Sega and Sony, and the company has sold a good amount of units so far. Now, Trip Hawkins' company has announced the M2 upgrade for 3D0 and it seems industry attention is once again turning back to the system.

With its 66 MHz CPU, an enlarged 528 Mbit-per-second bus bandwidth, and a host of hardware graphic effects, including Z-buffering, the M2 isn't merely set to go head to head with the Ultra 64; one comparison rated it 50% more powerful than the *Daytona USA* coin-op! Indeed, 3D0 cites the machine as five to 10 times more powerful than any existing home console in the market.

Bob Faber, managing director of 3D0 Europe, explains: "M2 is an extension of the original 3D0 technology, what it principally shows is that the original 3D0 platform is one on which to build the future of entertainment. It's more akin to what you'd expect from a systems-oriented company, rather than one in the toy business."

Is the platform expanding in a way similar to the PC platform? "Yeah. And when the M2 first enters the market place, people will see it as an upgrade. Buyers will initially be won by the appeal of the tremendous amount of titles for 3D0. Later, they'll start to slide over to the M2 technology."

Neil Young, vice president of product development at Virgin's Irvine, CA offices, is very enthusiastic about M2, but stresses, "We have no firm plans for it at the moment. We're currently having discussions with 3D0, but we're not committing yet. We've had some success with the original 3D0 system, but there are so many software titles, and a relatively small user base."

But doesn't this go against the idea of M2 being an upgrade? "This Christmas will be the last season for sales of the original 3D0 — in the USA at least, they'll come out with a stand-alone too, and this will be the key option rather than the upgrade. If they can be price competitive with that, then it'll compete very well against the PlayStation and Saturn."

You're currently developing a title for Ultra 64 (to be released mid-'96) — don't you think Nintendo's machine is more of a competitor in terms of hardware? The criteria for us supporting M2 is performance — and it surpasses our needs in that area. But the consumer won't differentiate performance so much. Cost will be the compelling reason to buy, and so it'll be fighting against Sony's and Sega's machines. Plus, with the Ultra 64 being cartridge-based, it'll be targeted slightly differently. The Ultra 64 is a real consumer videogame machine."

But can the 3D0 really get it right this time? The launch plans (or lack of them) don't seem to herald a major new advancement. Despite Young's comments, 3D0 still insists it'll be released only as an upgrade, with a limited scale release at the end of the year. 3D0 hasn't even made a decision yet as to which territory it's going to launch the M2 in!

And yet, with Faber saying that M2 will be five to 10 faster than the PlayStation, and a hopeful competitive price, 3D0 may still become the front runner.

Mark Ramshaw is a free-lance videogame and music journalist who spends his spare time wrestling with Windows 95.

breaking

Datebook

July

Windows World/Chicago '95 spotlights the latest Windows-based solutions for enterprises, including client/server products, Internet links, and new game applications, as well as a three-day conference program and half-day tutorials. This event takes place from Wednesday to Friday, July 26 to 28, at McCormick Place, Chicago, IL. For hotels, call the Sheraton Chicago, Best Western Grant Hotel Park, Fairmont Hotel at Illinois Center, Hotel Inter-Continental North and South Towers, or the Ritz Carlton. To register, call (617) 449-5554, enter Code 88 for reg. forms, or call (617) 449-6600.

COMDEX/Canada '95, showing from July 12 to 14, 1995, at the Metro Toronto Convention Centre, Skydome, Toronto, ON, is Canada's computer marketplace for resellers and coincides with Windows World/Canada and LAN Expo. The number of exhibiting companies is 600; and 80 seminars, conferences, or sessions on information technology trends, applications, distribution channel and management issues will be held. For more info, call the Interface Group at (617) 449-6600.

August

The conference, August 6 to 11, and the exhibition August 8 to 10, will be held in the Los Angeles Convention Center, LA, CA, and are part of the 22nd International Conference on Computer Graphics and Interactive Techniques, **SIGGRAPH '95**. The focus is international in flavor but full of local goodies, including digital techniques, the possibilities of cyberspace, new entertainment media, and more. There will be more than 30 courses, numerous panels, educators' programs, an computer animation festival/electronic theater, an art gallery, a fundamentals seminar, and of course, the exhibition itself. For reservation information, please call 1 (312) 321-6830, fax (312) 321-6876, or modem at For early registration discount, send in registration forms before Friday, June 30. Costs vary depending on member, nonmember, student, and other elements, so please call.

The MacWorld Expo features hundreds of companies and a complete conference program devoted exclusively to Macintosh hardware, software, peripherals, and services, and will be held from Tuesday to Friday, August 8 to 11, at the World Trade Center and the Biased Exel Center, Boston, MA. For more information, please call Ditch Hall Associates at (617) 361-8000.

September

PC Home Expo is the first public computer show emphasizing small offices, home offices, and home computing; the event will kick off on September 28 to September 1, 1995, at the Jacob K. Javits Convention Center, New York, NY. Exhibitors will display PC hardware, software, and peripherals, and will enable consumers and educators to test the latest products. This is the first of many fun events. Call (800) 829-3976, or (201) 346-1400 for more info.

SHOW ORGANIZERS: If your show isn't listed here, it's because you haven't told us about it. Call (415) 696-1888, or FAX information to (415) 696-1678, or send details to DATEBOOK, **NEXT Generation**, 1350 Old Bayshore Highway, Suite 210, Burlingame, CA 94010.

In 1995 games will



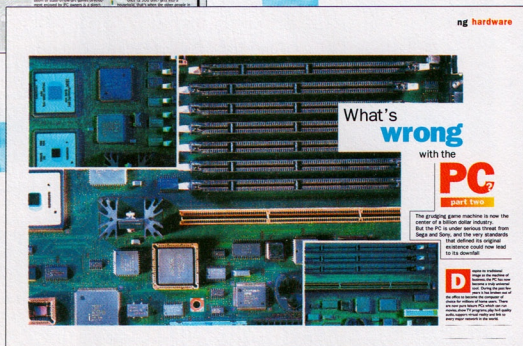
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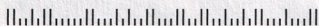
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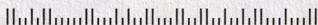
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Sega Saturn

Tech Specs

- CPU: 2 x 586-2 Intel CPU @ 200MHz
 - Memory: 16MB
 - Video: 17MB
 - Main: ADAM 100MHz
 - Sound: Real 12.2K
 - Buffer: ADAM 752K
 - Super ROM: 512K
 - Battery: 94M 32K
- Graphics:**
- Resolution: 384 x 224 or 640 x 320
 - Colors: 24-bit palette, 32,000 shades
- Sprites/polygons: VSP1 chip, dual frame buffer
 - Background: VSP2 chip; 2 layers, 2 rotation planes
- Sound:**
- 16-bit GRACOM processor @ 11.3MHz
 - Yamaha FM1 processor
 - 7st. PCM, 44.1kHz sampling frequency, 32 voices
 - DSP 128 words/4000
- Data storage:**
- Double-speed CD-ROM drive
 - Cartridge slot

It wasn't supposed to happen. The possibility that its next-gen hardware would face serious competition simply hadn't figured in Sega's calculations. So when news broke in November 1992 that Sony was developing a videogame system capable of revolutionary performance, all hell broke loose. Those who had seen the machine working claimed that

In January 1993, Sega announced the development of a 32bit console that would take videogames from the fading age of 16bit into a bright new era. For a while, the future belonged to Sega.



But it didn't stay that simple for long. Last month the Saturn arrived in Japan after a grueling journey from conception to hard plastic. So what has Sega achieved?

ng hardware

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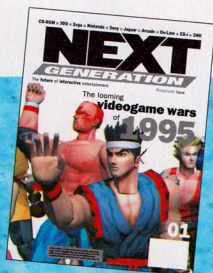
PlayStation

ng hardware

Sony's bid for power

It's early December in Tokyo. The holiday buying season has started in earnest and *The Lord Of The Flying Saucers* is in the grip of its annual frenzy of consumption. Scores of fashion-conscious, young Japanese pour in and out of expensive department stores, carrying home bags under the weight of many shoppers, and the month's electronic goods fests, *Highways*, continue under a skyline of shimmering neon. In the midst of this hectic scene, *Lord* calls out its usual

magazines
already have





3DO:
Past, present, and

ng special



future

ng special

The Panasonic FZ-10



Manufacturer: Panasonic

Price: \$399.95 SRP

Release: January 1995

Panasonic's remodeled 3DO base unit, the FZ-10, appeared in Japan last year, its sleek new lines ensuring that interest remained buoyant in such an important territory. Completely restyled, the biggest change lies with the machine's CD system — the front-loading tray mechanism has been replaced with a lid system. A Gex pack-in is expected soon.



The AV expansion port appearing on the machine's right side (above) will fit the eagerly-awaited M2 accelerator to give a snug-fitting Genesis look. The FZ-10's power switch (right) has been shifted around from the front to the left side, for no apparent reason



Panasonic appears to have gone backward rather than forward with the system's redesign — the FZ-10 has a look strangely reminiscent of NEC's aging PC Engine Turbo Duo console. Access and power LEDs remain largely untouched



The rear of the machine holds few surprises, with no standard RF port in sight. From left to right: de-bugging/country code protection switch (available on press and programmers' machines only), S-VHS port, composite video and audio (l and r) ports, expansion port, power cable socket

It was the best of things. It was Trip Hawkins' baby and it was the future of videogaming. When details of the 3DO format and screen shots of selected titles began to show up in the game press in the late summer of 1993, to a gaming world caught between the demise of 16-bit and the early rumblings of a PC gaming explosion, it seemed as if the videogame world was now finally on the brink of that too often-discussed utopia — a quantum leap in performance that would also become an industry standard.

It was the worst of things. Within a few short months the prelaunch hysteria was followed by postlaunch disappointment. Many who had subscribed to the 3DO vision were left with a bad taste in their mouths and bad jokes on their lips — of which "3 Dozen Ordered," "3 DOA," and "Doh! Doh! Doh!" (think about it) were the most viciously funny.

But the die-hard fanatics and the incurable cynics both proved to be wide of the mark. Despite the roller-coaster ride 3DO has experienced since its conception, reports of the system's demise have run conversely to a catalog of accomplishments that the company has steadily been amassing. Worldwide sales of far more than half a million units to date show that 3DO is alive — and in some cases — most definitely kicking.

And now, just as many observers were expecting 3DO to slide into obscurity, overtaken in terms of power, price, and prestige by the "superconsoles" from Sega, Sony, and Nintendo, the Redwood City, CA-based company has a chance to disprove its critics once and for all.

Forget M2 —

the technology is at least a year from mass market penetration. But as Nintendo's Ultra 64 slips into the future (US gamers won't see it until April 1996), and Saturn and PlayStation face inflated US prices at the hand of the mighty yen, the basic 3DO player has a chance to extend its head start and win the 32-bit race.

It is **NEXT Generation's** belief that if one of 3DO's hardware manufacturers can produce a 3DO player for sale at \$199 in the US — a price that has to be possible

after two years of integration, redesign, and streamlining of the original unit — then 3DO can steal the next generation crown right from under the noses of a sleeping Nintendo, and over-priced Sega and Sony.

The games are right (the second generation of 3DO software is an equal match for many of its newer, first generation rivals). The timing is right (these are the last few months before the arrival of PlayStation). The imminent arrival of 3DO's M2 hardware is right (3DO owners will have a chance to upgrade beyond the power of PlayStation and Saturn — at least 3DO claims — before 1996).

All that is needed is the courage to price the basic system right — and the \$50 rebate recently announced by GoldStar on its \$399 machine is nowhere near enough.

One of 3DO's hardware manufacturers needs to take a big chance, and do it quick. Before this can happen, however, Panasonic and Goldstar need to acknowledge that the 3DO machine is not equal to a direct comparison with PlayStation and Saturn — an admission that, so far at least, neither of them have been prepared to make.

In order to understand the future of 3DO, it's important to look to its past. In the two years since 3DO's launch, the company has seemingly enjoyed the successes and failures of a lifetime.

The headline-grabbing history of 3DO can be explained by the "the vision thing." Bill Clinton had it, George Bush didn't. Trip

Hawkins had it and set about building the entire 3DO format on his own personal "vision thing." The concept appealed to most everyone; a standard akin to VHS or CD audio, a huge performance leap from 16-bit, and the support of major

players like Electronic Arts, Matsushita, and (the recently departed) AT&T.

To achieve this dream, a new business model was created in which Trip Hawkins' 3DO Company designed hardware that other independent companies could manufacture. Despite its immediate disadvantages — expensive hardware prices were immediately anticipated, owing to the fact that a hardware company with no software business (3DO's partners) would insist upon making an immediate

profit on their system sales, as opposed to the traditional Atari/Sega/Nintendo approach of deliberately taking a loss on hardware to make a profit on the subsequent software sales — the approach 3DO was proposing was at least inventive, fresh, and untried.

Then there was Hawkins himself. He had made Electronic Arts the biggest entertainment software company in the world; if anyone knew the game market, he



Despite much criticism, Goldstar is the only manufacturer to alter 3DO's joystick design

surely did. Finally, there was the software. Screen shots of EA's *Shockwave*, Crystal Dynamics' *Crash 'n' Burn*, and other dazzling-looking games were like manna from heaven to an audience tired of the clone-u-like 16-bit software scene. There was little wonder, then, that 3DO needed no help in selling Hawkins' vision.

Even in Europe, without the hyper-charismatic Trip Hawkins leading the charge, 3DO could seemingly do no wrong.

"People built up the hype around us without us actually having to say anything," explains 3DO Europe's managing director, Bob Faber. "We spent a lot of time trying to calm down people's expectations, saying 'Wait a minute, this doesn't happen overnight, it takes time.' One of the reasons why we had to launch early was because we knew it would take a long time to get established."

But Faber admits that 3DO couldn't possibly have lived up to people's initial expectations. "We knew it was a risk, we knew we didn't have enough really great software, but we had to do it."

Nearly two years down the line, the 3DO vision is still strong, according to Faber; it's only short-sightedness that has led people to write off the system. "The

"M2 is a showcase to prove that the foundation strategy is the right thing. That's really what the message is about M2 this year"

Bob Faber, managing director, 3DO Europe

ng special

The Sanyo Try



Manufacturer: Sanyo

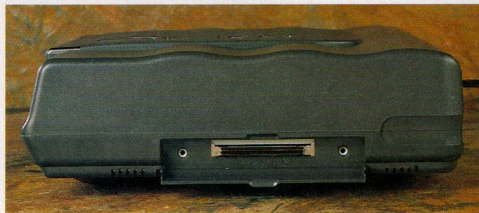
Price: ¥54,800

Release: March 1995 (Japan)

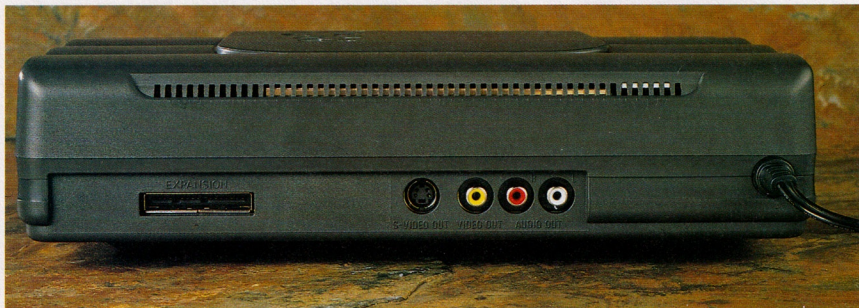
Sanyo is the newest arrival to the 3DO family, with its curiously curvaceous, though hugely appetizing, TRY system.

Taking the original Panasonic FZ-1 machine as its inspiration, it uses a front-loading tray with which to load CDs. However, the tray itself actually houses the drive mechanism (rather than being merely a form of transference to the machine's internals), making for a delicate feel which belies its durability.

So far, there are no plans for a US release.



A side-on view of Sanyo's TRY machine (above) reveals a rippled styling which is completely at odds with the rest of the family's straight, clinical edges. The standard AV expansion port lies beneath a plastic cover



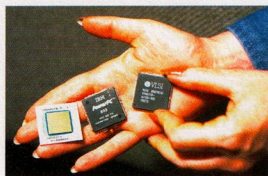
The TRY's rear is clean and to the point. Left to right: expansion port, S-VHS port, composite video port, audio (l and r) ports, power supply cable



thing that we've done which people fail to realize is that we have taken a really big lead in this generation when we weren't even on the map two years ago," argues Faber. It's

certainly true that while 3DO was busy building a market for itself, its competitors stole publicity from under its nose. Itself a sour indictment of the fickle videogame industry, 3DO has been subjected to over-the-top hype followed by over-the-top criticism. Now, the company believes, such difficulties are in the past.

The birth pangs of 3DO are over and now the format faces its biggest challenge with the impending arrival of the Sony



Internally, 3DO's M2 hardware is completed. It's now simply a question of producing the system at a cheap enough price to sell

PlayStation and the Sega Saturn. It's a challenge that all major partners and investors with 3DO feel they're ready to meet. "I think that 3DO can compete favorably," reasons Panasonic's Bob Tate. "It's going to be tough — our competitors are big, responsible companies, and they will make an impact on the marketplace. We'll move from a position where we have a product which is relatively unique to one where there is much closer competition."

Sony, Sega, and Nintendo are playing a game that the interactive entertainment business knows well and, for better or worse, trusts in varying degrees. In the console industry (the "toy model" as Trip Hawkins dubs it), a piece of hardware is sold for a limited timespan and then is dropped in favor of a new machine a few years later. And while it fails to win the reverence of Hawkins' ideals, it's a process that game developers have become accustomed to.

3DO's more open marketplace, in which many different manufacturers can

release (essentially the same upgradeable machines) at different times, campaigns for a more free, more democratic market. Faber insists that 3DO's lower development costs and potential for greater profit margins is the way forward for the industry as a whole and is crucial to the company's strategy.

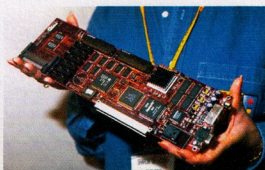
However, Panasonic's Bob Tate freely admits that this approach has left 3DO looking less dynamic than either Sony or Sega. "In the short term, I believe it's fair to say that it makes life more difficult. From startup, a single company can be very dynamic. However, I think you'll see that when more people are involved in a wider range, the benefits will escalate accordingly. You get a slower start but a faster second phase."

For Tate, the 3DO vision is something that both the industry and the consumer have to get used to. "Expectation is on a fast turnover in product. That isn't our style, and both the customer and ourselves are having to get used to where that leads us. Us, in terms of having to move more quickly to upgrade and develop, and the customer, in terms of looking at something that provides him [or her] with the long-term stability."

If you haven't noticed yet, the word "long term" crops up with revealing regularity among any of the major

companies involved with 3DO discusses the system. The combination of a large number of manufacturers and scalable, constantly evolving architecture remains the bedrock of 3DO. "When you think about 3DO, it's much better to think about it the way you think about a PC as a foundation, and not as a point [single, limited-lifespan] product, like a videogame system," explains Faber. "We know we can extend the product and have it evolve through time; they already know that they can't do that with theirs and they're willing to make a point product and replace it with something else later."

With the PC totally dominant in the computer market, it's a comparison that all at 3DO are keen to play up, but while the philosophy is there, and hardware upgrades are in the pipeline, it's still early to talk about life beyond 3DO's immediate future.



An early working version of M2's development board. Select game designers will receive these throughout the summer

Sales of more than half a million units are significant but, as Panasonic and 3DO are happy to admit, it's still strictly early-adopter numbers — nowhere near the mass-market penetration that any "industry standard" would need to achieve.

However, it's worth remembering that the Sega Genesis only sold 150,000 units in its first year, (and also received a less than emphatic welcome from the press), but still went on to capture the lion's share of the 16-bit market. What is there to show that 3DO can make it to the big sales league? On the hardware front, 3DO's principal strength is that it has partners big enough (in resources, if not in stomach) to absorb the high initial costs and relatively low turnover in the early life of the format.

Panasonic, part of the \$60 billion Matsushita conglomerate, and Goldstar, a brand of the \$40 billion Korean Lucky Goldstar Group of Companies, are both committed to the format. "Matsushita's not a company to back

off from an investment," says Panasonic's Tate. "It is very early days with the product and to us it's a long-term product. Five years from now we would see it as being a mainstream entertainment product." But it's perhaps as significant that neither Panasonic nor Goldstar are established in the interactive entertainment market — the 3DO project is, for these corporate giants at least, merely the equivalent of dipping a toe in the water. Or, to use Tom Kalinske's analogy, at a steak and eggs breakfast the hens are involved, but the cow is committed. And right now, it's only Trip Hawkins providing the role of cow.

But one of the reasons why they are keen to lead 3DO be the one to lead them

**With FIFA Soccer,
Electronic Arts really
moved the goal posts
and produced and the
3DO's first worthy game**

ng special

The **GoldStar** 3DO**Manufacturer:** Goldstar**Price:** \$399.95 SRP**Release:** October 1994

Korean electronics firm Goldstar launched its 3DO model in Japan in October last year and in the US in November — where it recently claimed it was outselling Panasonic's own machine.

And it won't be long before another electronics giant feels the pinch of Goldstar's building marketing drive — the company has licensed the CD-i technology from Philips and plans to have a compatible machine ready for launch in the summer.



Goldstar's machine opens on the left side to reveal the AV expansion port nestling in a yawning aperture (above). 3DO will license future add-on technology to third party manufacturers to ensure that each brand will have its own unique design and avoid potential incompatibilities. The base unit has an understated design compared to other units (right)



From the rear, it's clear that Goldstar has spent a significant amount of time in order to cover all options. From left to right: de-bugging/country code protection switch, expansion port, NTSC signal switch, RF port, S-VHS port, composite video port, audio (l and r) ports, power supply cable



to the water in the first place is that 3DO offers relatively low risk.

Whereas Sony (after its plans to produce a SNES CD-ROM player for the SNES broke

down with Nintendo) decided to go it alone and create its own format from scratch, 3DO has, in contrast, given Panasonic, Goldstar, and other manufacturers, like Sanyo, a low-risk opportunity to buy into a format which has already undergone the expensive development process and has the potential for greater things. It's something that Goldstar's Andrew Chorzelski recognizes. "3DO has offered us a relatively quick gateway into the market. When we looked around at the technologies available at the time, 3DO gave us the most advanced and upgradeable system at the time."

Despite its initial concept of a multimedia player, Goldstar is keen to promote its machine as a game-plus format, promoting the benefits of Kodak Photo CD, among other applications.

"Games, first and foremost, remain the reason anyone buys a 3DO. But if you're going to be spending \$399, the consumer has the right to expect the machine to grow with them," argues Chorzelski.

After keeping a very low profile at first, Matsushita appears to be finally putting some money behind 3DO with a \$15 million advertising campaign scheduled for this spring in Japan — a market where 3DO performed better than expected with sales of around 360,000 units. Another significant factor in 3DO's longevity will be M2, the second generation 3DO project which — although ostensibly just a very powerful polygon shifter — should raise the 3DO's capabilities way beyond those of its immediate rivals.

However, up until its spoiling tactics at E' (see page 19) 3DO itself was downplaying M2. "I don't think that this year is a commercial event for M2," says Faber. "This year, M2 is a showcase to prove that that the foundation strategy is the right thing. That's really what the message is about M2 this year." So far, the company has given little away other than that a roster of arcade conversions and

original titles are already underway.

But even simply using M2 as spoiler must be sweet revenge for the drip-feed of PlayStation and Saturn details that Sony and Sega used to douse any flames of support 3DO attempted to ignite during its first year on sale.

At the end of the day, however, it all comes down to money. The critical mass of unit sales and momentum needed to ensure the continued life of any games platform can only be achieved by fast sales at the system's infancy. Whatever the future holds for 3DO hardware, the present price of the system severely limits its potential audience. "It is still the specialized gaming market rather than the more mainstream game/family entertainment market," admits Panasonic's Tate. It remains to be seen if Sony will be pricing its console to appeal to a wider market, but right now 3DO is only hitting a few, a wealthy few. "We're not

appealing to the traditional early- to mid-teens market," claims Goldstar's Chorzelski. "The mean age seems to be between 25 and 26. [This is a male who] is PC literate, has access to more than one videogame

system, and probably doesn't consider himself a 'gamer.'"

Goldstar, Panasonic, and 3DO itself are confident that, ultimately, their machines will break through to a wider audience and hardware prices will fall accordingly. Integrated hardware is reducing costs and 3DO is very confident that its hardware will at least be "competitive" with its competitors as they launch throughout 1995.

The seeds of long-term

success are certainly there in the hardware, and how much 3DO's hardware partners are prepared to sell it for, but 3DO also needs something that has been relatively thin on the ground since the machine's US launch in September 1993 — high-quality, original software. The old adage that software sells hardware still



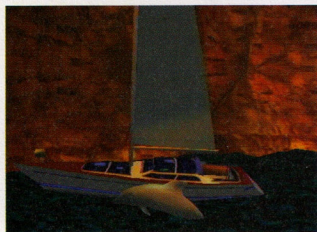
Trip Hawkins has dipped his toe back into the game development waters by establishing Studio 3DO in house, with great results



holds true and the quality of the 200-plus 3DO releases has, until now, been patchy. If anything has thrown doubt on Hawkins' vision, it's the fact that, it has taken a full 18 months on sale to amass a handful of "must have" titles for the 3DO. The software house most identified with 3DO in its early days, Palo Alto, CA-based Crystal Dynamics, has performed sporadically: flashy original titles like *Crash n' Burn*, *Total Eclipse*, and *Off-World Interceptor* have been nothing more than short-term temptations, but faithful conversions (like a clone of the Neo-Geo classic *Samurai Shodown*) and the original *Gex* have been well received.

Hawkins' alma mater, Electronic Arts, has distinguished itself, turning out a series of innovative, challenging, and visually enticing games. *Road Rash* and *John Madden Football* were ground-up conversions that went beyond the 16-bit originals, and while *The Need For Speed* wasn't quite *Ridge Racer* or *Daytona USA*, it still gave good wheelspin. With *FIFA Soccer*, EA really moved the goal posts and produced the 3DO's first worthy game.

Another strong title came from



M2's astonishing 3D performance is illustrated by this realtime demo of M2 hardware under software emulation

ng special

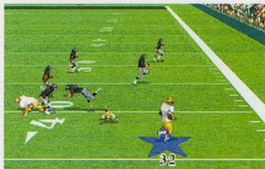
The 10 best 3DO games

Without ever seeming to attain a regular, reliable flow of quality titles, the 3DO has — in fits and starts — amassed a respectable game library. While the majority of its 200 plus software titles are best avoided, there's no arguing with the quality of the 10 games featured here. Each are either unique to 3DO, or provide an entertaining showcase of the system's power.

Imagine if this library of games was available to an expandable, upgradeable game system costing just \$249 or even \$299, and you begin to see the potential of Trip Hawkins' vision. It's unlikely that PlayStation will have 10 top quality titles at launch (although what strong titles there are look superior in application and potential to any of 3DO's best), and Saturn's summer release schedule is conspicuously lacking quality, sure-fire blockbusters.



FIFA Soccer — Electronic Arts
More than just a great sports game, *FIFA Soccer* shows what the 3DO can really do. The multiplayer experience alone demands that *FIFA* graces every 3DO owner's library.



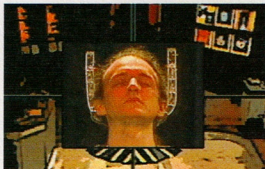
John Madden Football — Electronic Arts
Although not as revolutionary in terms of graphic processing as *FIFA*, 3DO's *John Madden Football* is as near as 3DO gets to having its 'killer app' for the US market.



Slam 'n' Jam — Crystal Dynamics
Another top sports title for the 3DO, this fast-paced, first-person basketball sim does a phenomenal job of bringing players into the action — rivaling anything on Sega Saturn.



Gex — Crystal Dynamics
If *Mario* is the Beatles, then meet the Monkees. But 3DO's first big-shot platform game turns out to be a lot more than just another wise-cracking copyright. Good fun.



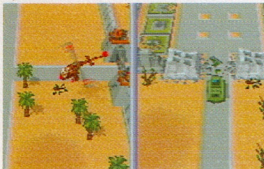
Immercenary — Electronic Arts
In a world straight out of *Neuromancer*, combatants slug it out with dozens of high powered gadgets. Not for everyone, but one of the deepest titles available on any system.



The Need for Speed — Electronic Arts
The action is too slow for many, but this title's impressive sales can't be ignored. Beautiful graphics combine with real-world physics to make an intriguing, if not entertaining, game.



Road Rash — Electronic Arts
This is, without a doubt, the best racing title available for 3DO. The lifelike city and country graphics are ensconced in an excellent driving model that truly races.



Return Fire — Prolific
The best two-player action/strategy game available for 3DO, if not any system. The no-frills graphics make way for smooth control, great gameplay, and a kicking soundtrack.



Super Street Fighter II Turbo — Panasonic
Sure it's got a long name, but this arcade-perfect translation of the most successful coin-op of all time earns the honor. A must-buy for fight fans, and a worthy alternative to *MK3*.



Super Wing Commander — Electronic Arts
A competent remake of the game that revolutionized PC gaming in 1991. The graphics aren't great, but players do get to hop into the cockpits of many different ships.

former Amiga developer Silent Software, which transformed its 1988 title, *Firepower*, into *Return Fire*. Released recently (and — for all you trivia buffs — featuring the maniacal laugh of RJ Mical, half of the team that designed 3DO's hardware) the blend of two-player action, tactical combat, and finely detailed 3D graphics make *Return Fire* one of the best titles on any format.

A third quality performer, a near dead-on, arcade-perfect conversion of *Super Street Fighter II X*, is as impressive and certainly helped shift the machine in Japan. In fact, it is possible to pick out a highly respectable top 10 list of "must have" titles, (as is illustrated on page 42) but aside from these titles, however, the general quality of 3DO software has been poor with too many ill-conceived originals (like EA's much-delayed *Shockwave*) and an strong overdose of uninspiring ports.

But looking back over the past 18 months, Bob Faber is characteristically candid about the slow flow of decent titles that 3DO endured for the first few months after launch but accepts that it was the price 3DO had to

pay for getting to the market first. "Would it have been greater if we'd have waited until 1994 to launch and had really eye-poppingly great software that would totally blow

away every person you'd ever met? Yeah."

But the lead that 3DO has built up over the PlayStation and the Saturn by being out there first will, he believes, ensure that 3DO wins the 32-bit battle. Historically, "first-in equals first-place" was certainly true for Sega, who beat Nintendo to the market with the Genesis, but not so for Atari who lost out to Commodore's Amiga in the 16-bit computer market.

Naturally, he prefers to look forward to a brighter future of an original product. "We tell developers now, if you're doing ports, kill them. We don't need them. There are hundreds of original titles in development." However, Faber readily concedes that certain big name titles such as *Myst* do 3DO no harm at all.

3DO can take heart from another old adage that says it takes a couple of years for the development community to really get to grips with a machine and start

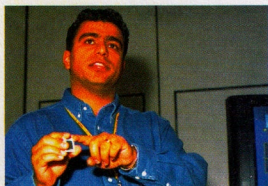
turning out great software (something PlayStation and Saturn owners may be facing as a steady stream of disappointing games come their way). There are currently 200 3DO titles in development worldwide, with more than 75 scheduled for release in the US this year alone.

That's a release schedule 3DO could have done with 18 months ago — especially as both Sony and Sega have a lot of titles in development — but it's proof that the surprise introduction of 3DO's much-maligned Market Development Fund (a \$3 levy on every title sold to cover advertising, promotion, and manufacturers' profits) late in 1994 hasn't deterred potential developers. "The reaction was initially pretty negative," accepts Faber. "I think what a lot of them did was take their foot off the gas for 30 days in the fall but once it became clear that it was good for their business they said, 'Now, I understand.'" In light of Sony's recent announcement of a \$7 royalty fee on each US CD release, which looks set to cut margins and drive up suggested retail prices (SPR), 3DO's Market Development Fund looks attractive.

A fresh crop of 3DO titles are renewing interest in the machine as the honeymoon period of the Saturn and PlayStation comes to a close (ironically, just as the machines are making their official

debuts on US soil). Both *BladeForce* and *Killing Time* from Studio 3DO look outstanding and third party titles like *PO'd* and *Slam 'n' Jam* are using the hardware well. This is the tip of the iceberg, claims Faber, taking the chance to get in a sideswipe against the 3DO's rivals. "It's pretty easy for 3DO, it's not as hard as you think. It's a lot harder to develop for the Saturn or the PlayStation. The systems put in place by 3DO were really good at getting developers up to speed."

While some degree of mutual trashing is inevitable as the PlayStation, the Saturn, and the 3DO gear up for battle on the shelves, it's true to say that 3DO has come in for more than its fair share of criticism. Not that Faber is asking for sympathy; he accepts that it comes



3DO representatives have toured the country spreading the M2 word to an audience prepared to invest \$500 with the competition. Can M2 keep their attention?

with the territory. "One of the reasons why there are so many more negative comments made about 3DO, even among developers, is because they won't make negative comments about other platforms for fear of getting hurt."

And as for the game players on the street? "I think the market will decide which is the better gaming platform" reasons Faber. There it is again, long term. 3DO isn't going to go away and its major partners are all in it for the duration — with support bolstered by both the 500,000 sales landmark having been passed and M2 coming on strong in development.

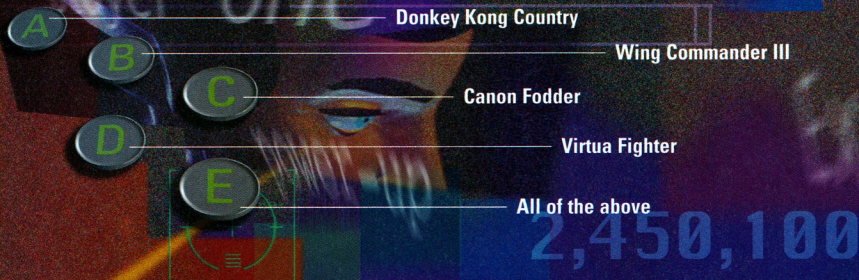
So is 3DO destined to be the global standard for interactive entertainment? Bob Faber is realistic but optimistic. "We're a lot smarter now about the way people react to that statement. When you begin to think about the establishment of standards around the world, it's something which moves in a glacial time frame. It really takes a long time, but we think we're doing the right things to make it happen."

The vision is alive and well. It's now just a matter of money.



Panasonic's new 3DO hardware was unveiled at E*. While the quality and sophistication of the casing doesn't suggest a price cut, Panasonic has yet to make any kind of announcement

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Sneak previews of games from around the world

The next generation systems' imminent US launch has developers scrambling to produce the titles that will be the next Big Thing. A run of new PlayStation titles on the way show a surprising mix of action, diverse strategy, and racing titles for a fledgling system. Be sure to take a look on page 64 for full reviews of games released this month.

46 Wipeout **PLAYSTATION**

A futuristic blend of racing and action with a nice, strong graphic punch.

53 Highlander **JAGUAR CD**

Battling immortals in a cartoon landscape give Jaguar CD its first big-name game.

55 Team 47 Goman **PLAYSTATION**

A chance to enter into a Japanese monster flick — without the rubber suit.

57 Ray Force **SATURN**

An old school shooter in a picture-perfect arcade translation for the Saturn.

58 Gunner's Heaven **PLAYSTATION**

A familiar looking platform shooter marches into the next generation.

59 Demo Derby **PLAYSTATION**

The perfect racer for gamers who would much rather collide than just drive.

60 Frankenstein **MACINTOSH**

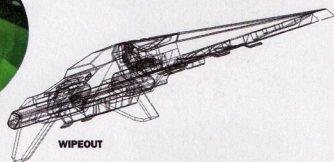
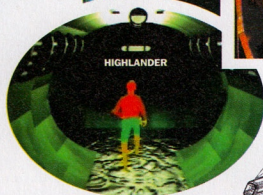
A new version of Mary Shelley's classic delivers horror from the monster's viewpoint.

61 Virtua Racing **SATURN**

After the long waiting period, Sega's arcade classic finally steps into the next generation.

62 Krazy Ivan **PLAYSTATION**

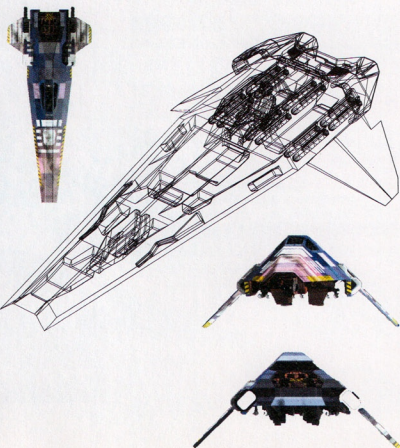
Could Psygnosis' slick new robot fighter redefine the tired world of 3D shooters?



ng alphas



Part of the Wipeout team: Jason Denton, Darren Douglas, Stewart Sockett, Rob Smith, Laura Grieve, and team leader, Nicky Caruss-Westcott (back row, left to right); Jim Bowers, Louise Smith, producer Dominic Mallinson, and game designer Nick Burcombe (front row, left to right)



Three images of Wipeout: mock-up screen shots (above) are a fair representation of how the finished game will look. SoftImage SGI software has played a significant role in creating the 3D ships and courses (right)



The *Wipeout* racecraft, shown in various stages of evolution (from top): a SoftImage wireframe model; the stripped-down PlayStation version; a flat-shaded PlayStation polygon ship; a fully 3D-rendered vehicle; and the original plastic model, constructed by artist Jim Bowers

Wipeout

Psygnosis' futuristic racer will be available in time for the US launch of the PlayStation in the fall. **NEXT Generation** met with the crew to see how *Wipeout* could bury the firm's "great graphics, no gameplay" tag once and for all

With Psygnosis now part of the Sony empire, it's no surprise that the Liverpool, UK, game developer has attained a head start in developing for the PlayStation. By the launch of the US machine in September 1995, the console will have four releases ready and the most prominent of them will be *Wipeout*, its *Ridge Racer*-beater, which was started in earnest last March.

Set in the future, *Wipeout* blends elements from *F-Zero*, *Crash 'n Burn*, and the innovative 16-bit Amiga/ST title *Powerdrome* to form what, even at this early juncture, looks like being the most exhilarating PlayStation title yet.

To the standard racing theme *Wipeout* adds violently undulating roadways and the option of using weapons against your opponents. The PlayStation hardware enables Psygnosis' programmers to generate *Wipeout*'s stomach-churning visuals in realtime — with a screen update that never drops below 30 fps.

Wipeout is the brainchild of artist Jim Bowers (the man responsible for much of the rendering in *Microcosm*) and game designer Nick Burcombe. "The idea was to make something very fast with lots of 3D movement," says Nick. "A big influence was *Powerdrome*, which was a good idea but didn't have the technology to do it justice, but *Wipeout* is a very different game — there are elements that make it unique.

"The plot isn't really important," he continues. "The point is that while you're playing — certainly with the internal view — the bigger the screen the more gut-wrenching the game, once we get the huge drop-offs and the rolling around effect. It's more the movement and making the player have real control in the 3D environment, rather than feeling that they're stuck to the surface and not really responding in the 3D space, like many car games."

In *Wipeout*, the player's craft is magnetically suspended in a trench which guides it around the course. Punctuating the track are hills, valleys, and jumps — if you miss one of these and incur a time penalty, one of many robotic crash vehicles will transport, via tractor

ng alphas



These shots of the first course are mock-ups; however, NEXT Generation played an early version of this very track



beam, your ship slowly back on to the course and back into the race.

Like Formula 1 racing, there are four major constructors in *Wipeout*, each of which sponsors two identical

vehicles, with eight crafts competing in a single race. A standard point system provides the means of measuring your progress through the ranks.

But with the

Inclusion of F1-style competition, guile, and cunning, *Wipeout* relies on other ways of getting ahead of your opponents.

"Weapons play a major part in the two-player game," explains Nick. "The computer opponents all respond in the correct way — they all have their own styles of combat. The one in the very heavy craft performs a lot of blocking maneuvers and cutting in front of you, and there's one that's very maneuverable, but they're excellent with weapons as well."

Best of all, however, is that the game will make full use of the

PlayStation's serial link capability (the cable is due soon in Japan) for a potentially lethal head-to-head mode.

Wipeout boasts 10 full tracks, split into two racing classes. The first five courses are for amateurs, and enables players to hone their skills before moving up to the next five, which are much bigger and include alternative routes and secret paths.

All of the tracks are first designed on paper and annotated with scenery ideas and course elevations. These are then passed over to the artists who render the course in 3D, using SoftImage software running on SGI systems.

A lot of care has been expended on designing the courses so that they mask the PlayStation's limited drawing horizon. To avoid situations like in *Ridge Racer* — and, to a greater extent, *Daytona USA* — where the scenery suddenly appears in front of you, the artists use trackside scenery and the twists and turns of the course to either hide points where the player can see too





Shots of the rendered Wipeout sequence produced for the MGM movie, Hackers. The high resolution SGI footage doubles as a state-of-the-art videogame played by the film's protagonists



far into the distance, or to draw the eye away from a point where scenery might appear. A completed course can be "flown" along in *SoftImage* to check that it will work without any problems or glitches on the PlayStation.

Completed courses are then

ported over to the development hardware, using software coded in-house. "In order to meet the deadlines, people have had to create their own conversion tools rather than using third-party tools," states Jim Bowers. "I think that it's been a big learning experience for the programmers because they probably know *SoftImage* completely inside-out by this point!"

Time invested in

dedicated *SoftImage* software has proven invaluable, as Nick Burcombe maintains: "The tools also include materials, lighting, texturing — all that stuff is generated for the PlayStation out of our own in-house tools. And they are reusable as well. Stuff like capturing the lighting across the tracks — that's not something we have to get the PlayStation to do any more."

Producer Dominic Mallinson concurs: "The only thing that's not going through *SoftImage* is the dynamic play adjustment features,

which are specific to bits of the track. Otherwise, everything is being modeled in *SoftImage*." And *SoftImage* looks to be a permanent addition to the developer's repertoire. "If your tools are really technical, really programmer orientated," explains Mallinson, "you can't get the artistic, creative people to design what really looks and feels good — that's the important thing."

Adding to the "look and feel" of *Wipeout* are corporate emblems and logos generated by a top design agency named The Designers Republic. This company's futuristic, pseudo-Japanese styling should add considerable dynamism and believability to the proceedings.

Pygnosis also has plans to up the marketing stakes for *Wipeout*. Trackside billboards — like those promoting forthcoming Namco titles in *Ridge Racer* — may well be taken up by real-world advertisers. And several minutes of *SoftImage*-rendered *Wipeout* footage is the focal point of a game sequence in the

<http://www.ea.com/eastudio.html>

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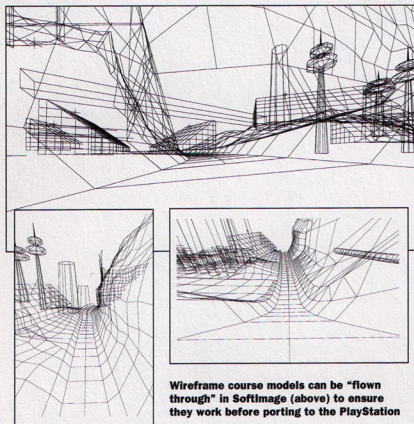
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Wireframe course models can be "flown through" in *Softimage* (above) to ensure they work before porting to the PlayStation

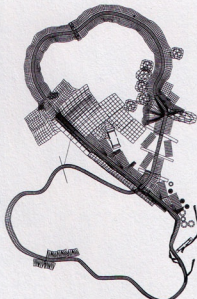
MGM movie *Hackers*. Music, too, is more than backseat audio, as Glen O'Connell at Psygnosis explains: "Sony Music has given us the use of its catalog, to get a host of different dance bands in the vein of Leftfield, Apollo 440, and so on. We want to get some names behind it, because the plan is to launch a compilation CD at the same time as the game. And, as we have discovered, that sort of thing sells very well in Japan."

With marketing, music, design, and graphics all falling into place, the only unknown factor is gameplay. And from early tastes of the game, Psygnosis seems to have that in the bag too.



Credits

Producer: Dominic Mallinson
Product manager: Sue Campbell
Team leader: Nicky Caruss-Westcott
Game designer: Nick Burcombe
Concept artist: Jim Bowers
Intro artist: Lee Caruss-Westcott
Graphic artist: Louise Smith
Graphic artist: Laura Grieve
Graphic artist: Darren Douglas
Programmer: Dave Rose
Programmer: Rob Smith
Programmer: Jason Denton
Programmer: Stewart Sockett



Each course is first designed on paper by Nick Burcombe (right). A three dimensional wireframe model is then produced in Microsoft's *Softimage* (left), prior to its PlayStation conversion



If Psygnosis' plans come to fruition, the finished game will sport a variety of trackside billboards boasting real-world, paid-for advertising

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Highlander

Atari's fledgling Jaguar CD system is pushing the console in the direction of classic PC action-adventures like *Alone In The Dark*



Format: **Jaguar CD**
 Publisher: **Atari**
 Developer: **Lore Design**
 Release Date: **July**
 Origin: **UK**



The range of scenery in the game is impressive (top). Traditional animation from the TV series provides the cut scenes (above)

Following the launch of the Jaguar CD-ROM, Atari will begin exploiting the potential of its custom 790 MB format. One of the first games to be released for the system is Lore Design's action-adventure, *Highlander* — the product of a license agreement with Gaumont Television, creator of the *Highlander* animated TV series (itself based on the cult films starring Christopher Lambert and Sean Connery).

The game started as a one-on-one fighter, somewhat like *Rise Of The Robots*, but soon transcended that genre, evolving into an *Alone In The Dark*-style adventure with 16-bit prerendered backgrounds, polygonal characters, a puzzle element, and a coherent plot. Quentin McLeod, the central protagonist, and one of the last of a race of immortals on a post-apocalyptic Earth, must seek the guidance of others before claiming The Prize — absolute knowledge.

Lore employed motion capture techniques to construct and animate



All *Highlander*'s backdrops, like this dramatic valley scene, were rendered in 3D Studio and are displayed in 16-bit color, with the character laid on top

the characters, developing custom tools for data to be transferred from the capture equipment directly to the Jaguar. Atari hopes that the resulting smooth, realistic motion will make up for the small number of polygons used for the characters — McLeod is made up of only about 300 polygons.

The action-adventure format is one that's served PC developers very well, and if Lore can produce a game capturing the atmosphere and gameplay of *Alone In The Dark*, Jaguar owners will be satisfied.

Quentin McLeod, hero of both the film and the TV series, is composed of about 300 polygons. In this section he has to explore a complex network of tunnels

The game started as a one-on-one fighter, somewhat like *Rise Of The Robots*, but soon transcended that genre, evolving into an *Alone In The Dark*-style adventure



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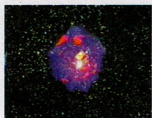
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Team 47



Head-to-head fighting will only carry you so far. Sometimes you'll need to stop back, quickly refocus, and out-think your opponent



After destroying an asteroid, Earth is forced to deal with the fallout of its destructive activity

Not your average fighting game, *Team 47 Goman* from 47 Tek drops players into a 3D arena in which their mechs hide, flee, and plan, as well as simply jumping into brawls. Unlike typical slugfests, gamers in *Goman*, while protecting Earth from alien invaders, will have to

devise how to protect certain buildings and units while attacking their often superior foes. Other factors of the virtual landscape, like fleeing civilians and vehicles, can help or hinder your character in his or her quest to stop the destructive visitors.

Each mech in *Goman* is designed for combat in specific

areas and situations, and part of the unique strategies of the game comes in deciding which robot is suitable for which mission. Some of the units, like the Katamech and the Sabermach, are made for pure fighting, while others, like the Stealthmech and the Mermach, use their speed and environmental



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As a smart new fighting title, the latest innovation from 47 Tek lays the groundwork for the future of true 3D gaming

Goman

Format: **PlayStation**

Publisher: **Coconuts**

Developer: **47 Tek**

Release Date: **Oct. (Japan)**

Origin: **US**



Your first battle will take you to the Mohave Desert where you'll battle the slow and methodical, scorpion-ankylosaurus hybrid, Roggosh

compatibility to achieve their victories.

Each of the different warriors contains about 400 to 500 polygons in their makeup, fully texture mapped, and can have around 100 animation routines of up to 30 frames built into their movements. Special moves are inventive and smooth, from Sabermach's Katana Hashin, a spinning move that homes in on the enemy, to the Stealthmech's self-explanatory Cartwheel kick. All of this is displayed on amazing landscapes that, at any given time, contain 3,000 texture-mapped polygons.

All in all, *Goman's* intriguing story line, slick graphics, and Godzilla-meets-Robotech style of fighting make an impressive show. While it's still way too early to call, this is definitely a game worth watching for.

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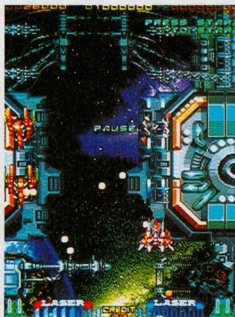
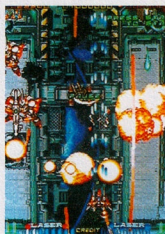
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Ray Force



The standard laser at work (above left). Weapons can be powered up, as indicated by the meter at the bottom of the screen (above right)

Another classic arcade shooting game is headed for home screens with the Saturn's answer to PlayStation's *Raiden*



The blue homing laser proves to be the most powerful component of your limited armory (top and above)



Ray Force's backgrounds don't feature as much variation as *Raiden*'s, but the title's gameplay is more tightly structured (top and above)

Format: **Saturn**
 Publisher: **Taito**
 Developer: **Taito**
 Release Date: **TBA**
 Origin: **Japan**

Many 16-bit console titles of this nature have promised to deliver a genuine arcade experience, but all have fallen short of the mark

The vertically scrolling shooter, once a staple in videogame fare, is undergoing a minor resurgence, with the likes of Seibu's PlayStation conversion of *Raiden* and now Taito's *Ray Force* on the Saturn. The 18-month-old coin-op had praise heaped onto it in Japan, though it never made it to US arcades in large numbers. The action, set in a space environment, enables two-player simultaneous play, as well as the usual assortment of deadly weapons. Many 16-bit titles of this nature have promised to deliver a genuine arcade experience, but nearly all have fallen short of the mark. However, with the Saturn's powerful sprite handling abilities, a perfect conversion of *Ray Force* should be possible; if the version seen at the recent Japanese Game Expo is anything to go by, then it already looks like a winner.



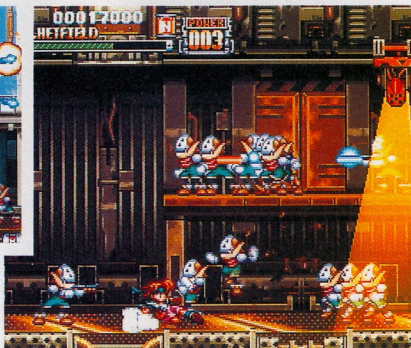
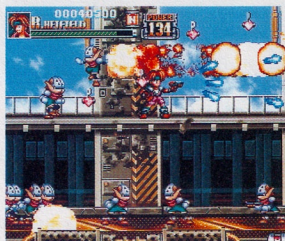
ng alphas

Gunner's Heaven

The game is reminiscent of the cult Genesis title *Gunstar Heroes*, a sideways scrolling platform shooter renowned for its frantic two-player action

Format: **PlayStation**
 Publisher: **SCE**
 Developer: **SCE**
 Release Date: **TBA**
 Origin: **Japan**

SCE seems intent on proving that there's still a successful place for old-fashioned scrolling shooters on its PlayStation



Polygon frenzy may have consumed many programming houses, but SCE is depending on traditional sprite techniques for its

forthcoming release, *Gunner's Heaven*.

The game is reminiscent of cult Genesis title *Gunstar Heroes*, a sideways scrolling platform shooter renowned for its frantic two-player action. Basic weapons can be upgraded to provide the two characters, Lucas and Axel, increased shooting range and firepower, and ropes and one-off power-ups are also scattered around the scenario to add a minimal tactical element to what would otherwise probably be a fairly subtle blaster.

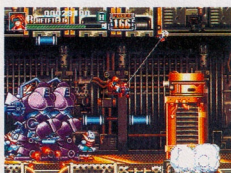
The spectacular explosions and detailed character animation will test the PlayStation's 2D abilities to the fullest. SCE will no doubt be using the limited programming time available to prevent the sprite slowdown seen in *Parodius* and *Raiden*.

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Axel and Lucas can collect power-ups (top). A mechanoid meets Hades (center and bottom)

Gunner's Heaven features spectacular explosions (above inset). The platform-based action is familiar (above). Detailed backgrounds enhance the game's appeal (left)



Demolition Derby

Wipeout isn't Psygnosis' only PlayStation title — also on the way is a destructive driving game from Reflections



Derby made its premiere at E' in May, where it vied for attention with a huge array of PlayStation titles from the US, Europe, and Japan

Format: **PlayStation**

Publisher: **Psygnosis**

Developer: **Reflections**

Release Date: **October**

Origin: **UK**



"We wanted to keep the density of cars very high. We're aiming for 10-car pile-ups, and the shortish circuits lend themselves perfectly to this kind of action"

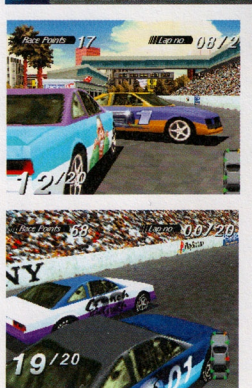
With technically rich 16-bit titles such as *Shadow Of The Beast* and *Awesome* behind it, game developer Reflections is now concentrating on PlayStation and PC software. *Demolition Derby* is a circuit-based driving game for the PlayStation with the emphasis firmly focused on high-speed destruction.

"Unlike *Ridge Racer*, we wanted to keep the density of cars on track very high," says Reflections' Martin Edmondson. "We're aiming for 10-car pile-ups, and the shortish circuits will lend themselves perfectly to this kind of action."

With a two-player linkup option and startlingly smooth 3D visuals, *Demolition Derby* has the potential to trounce *Ridge Racer* when it appears shortly after the PlayStation's US launch.



Keeping a close watch on your car's damage monitor will be crucial



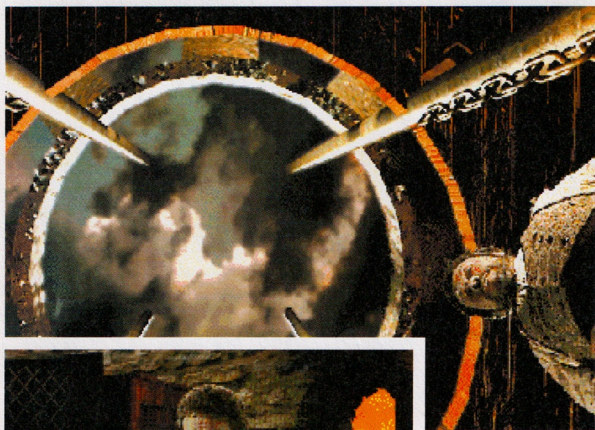
A swamped track (top). The car in front gets T-boned (middle). All manner of replay pans will be included (above)

ng alphas

Frankenstein:

Through the Eyes of the Monster

Tim Curry stars in an all-new multiplot version of Mary Shelley's classic horror story — narrated from the monster's viewpoint



Format: **Macintosh**
 Publisher: **Macplay**
 Developer: **Amazing Media**
 Release Date: **Late July**
 Origin: **US**



Last year you were being hanged... and now you open your eyes as a successful experiment (top). Once alive, you're free to roam the lab, but don't piss the doctor off, he brought you into this world, and... well, you know how that one goes

The funny thing about the "famous" tale of *Frankenstein* — dubiously immortalized in comics, games, movies, cartoons, and breakfast cereals — is how many people still have it wrong. Frankenstein was the doctor, not the monster. The "monster" was a learned, sensitive being, not the duh-duh, bolt-necked abomination he's usually portrayed as.

Amazing Media and Interplay have finally settled that score at least with this detailed, texture-mapped, photorealistically gorgeous point-of-view

horror adventure. As graphically beautiful as *Myst* but much darker, *Frankenstein: Through the Eyes of the Monster* opens with the player waking up on the table and staring into the face of the mad, egomaniac scientist Dr. Frankenstein (played by a an infuriatingly droll Tim Curry). Once up and about, the "monster" — you — must wander about the dark laboratory, piecing together the mysteries of the bizarre experiments around you, as well as that of your own inexplicable resurrection.

Do not be misled; this is no splatterpunk/Play It Loud piece. The mood in this game is very understated, even slow at times, and you've got to be in an investigative mood. But even the very basic demo version had a few extremely nasty surprises lurking in the corners. Also, the full-motion video and sound quality are top-notch. It's work like this that undoes the literary and artistic damage done by things like Frankenberry cereal and The Munsters.



The mad doctor raves about waveforms, energy, and the secrets of life itself. What does it mean (top, middle)? How can you use it? A Tesla coil, just what you don't need! Or do you (above)?

Virtua Racing

The Saturn is the latest Sega machine to acquire a version of the company's groundbreaking coin-op racer



All three coin-op tracks — including Big Forest (above) — appear in TWI's conversion, with faithful trackside objects (albeit with lowered detail)

Format: **Saturn**

Publisher: **Time Warner Interactive**

Developer: **TWI**

Release Date: **TBA**

Origin: **US**

Sega's seminal polygon racer, *Virtua Racing*, is slowly drifting Saturnwards, courtesy of Time Warner Interactive. Rather than embarking on a direct translation of the coin-op, however, the company's in-house development team has — as Sega itself did with its 32X update — elected to ramp up the number of selectable cars and tracks, as well as add numerous general enhancements.

Five vehicles are available for selection: a standard F1, an F160, a GTP, a coupé, and even a diminutive go-cart, with the option to customize your chosen car. The three coin-op circuits are joined by seven new ones, entitled Amazon Falls, Pacific Coast, Metropolis, Diablo Canyon, Alpine, Surfers, and Speedway. Like Saturn *Virtua Fighter*, *Virtua Racing* will have a lower polygon count than its arcade parent. The early version **NEXT Generation** saw with impressively smooth, although object popping in distant scenery components was as much in evidence as in the conversion *Daytona USA*.

Despite the age of its progenitor, *Virtua Racing* will prove welcome to the many hardcore racing fans who still regard it as a superior drive to *Daytona USA*.



The polygon count for the individual cars is surprisingly high

Five vehicles are available for selection: a standard F1, an F160, a GTP, a coupé, and even a diminutive go-cart



Virtua Racing's famous four "virtua" viewpoints are set to make it the Saturn intact, from in-car, complete with polygonal driver's hands (top left), to the detached but all-seeing view four (above left)

ng **alphas**

Krazy



The rendered intro screen provides you a chance to see exactly what kind of mech-warrior *Krazy Ivan* really is



And it features big, rolling, armored vehicles like in this shot above, which are never seen after the intro



One of the few enemies completed when *NEXT Generation* saw the product was this sharp looking robot



From the beautiful sky to the SGI-rendered enemies, *Krazy Ivan* is truly a visual feast

Ivan

Format: **PlayStation**
 Publisher: **Sony Psygnosis**
 Developer: **Psygnosis**
 Release Date: **September**
 Origin: **US**



The chaotic gameplay promises to be both exhilarating, with a 360° degree field of play, and full of messy goodness

Psygnosis made its mark by pioneering the Amiga with the legendary *Shadow Of The Beast* trilogy. Now, as Sony Psygnosis, the developing team will line up more than 20 titles for the PlayStation in hopes of capturing some of its past magic.

One of the titles planned for the US launch is *Krazy Ivan*, a first-person 3D mech-combat blaster, in which you see the world through the eyes of a shoot-now-ask-questions-later Russian Soldier named Ivan. And while this is by no means a new format, Psygnosis is adding several new elements that it hopes will submerge the player even deeper into the game.

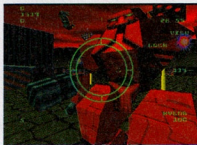
This game features total freedom of movement, with no tracks or hallways to hold back the adventurous; a pulsing techno soundtrack, composed especially for the game, that adds an edgy kick to the action; and the ability to look (and shoot) up and down, which could make *Krazy Ivan* the most controllable 3D shooter ever.

There are five fluid, 3D battle zones, each with their own distinct terrain and enemies — which were all rendered on

SGI workstations, then animated, texture-mapped, and Gouraud shaded to make them look as malevolent as possible (after all that work, you almost hate to kill them). The early version *NEXT Generation* saw didn't have many of the enemies or the AI in place yet, but the designers are promising an all-out assault from the air, the ground, the sides, and the rear. What this could mean is a 360° playing area which is constantly busy and must be precisely navigated. In games like *Doom*, enemies would appear at a higher plane and the computer aimed the weapon for you, while in *Krazy Ivan*, if you want to knock an enemy out of the sky you have to maneuver your mech-warrior suit to shoot up at him.

The individual parts of *Krazy Ivan* are now all in place. If Psygnosis can orchestrate them together into a playable game, then it could redefine the 3D shooter genre.

Psygnosis is counting on total freedom of movement, a hot soundtrack, and some amazing visuals to charge new life into the overdone mech-combat game



Even at close range, the enemies don't turn into the usual pixel monsters

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Actual screen shots used

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Tekken PlayStation Daytona USA Saturn 3DO Gex Aircars Jaguar Zaxxon's Motherbase 2000 Sega 32X
 Bioforce PC Surgical Strike Sega CD The Punisher Genesis Justice League Task Force SNES MK3 Arcade



Concise and honest reviews of the newest, hottest games

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Oelcome to another batch of expert reviews of this month's hottest (and coolest) releases. For the month of July we take a quick look at some of Japan's newest games for the Saturn, 3DO, and the PlayStation and some of the PC's latest wave of titles. To get an idea of how our ratings work, take a look at the chart below.

★★★★ Revolutionary
 Brilliantly conceived and flawlessly executed; a new high-water mark.

★★★★ Excellent
 A high-quality and inventive new game. Either a step forward for an existing genre, or a successful attempt at creating a new one.

★★★ Good
 A solid and competitive example of an established game style.

★★ Average
 Perhaps competent; certainly uninspired.

★ Bad
 Crucially flawed in design or application.

PlayStation

Cosmic Race

Publisher: Neorex
Developer: Neorex
Size: 1 CD-ROM

Release Date: Available now (Japan)

Every once in a while there comes a game title that seems to be missing that certain something that would make it a truly enjoyable game. *Cosmic Race* isn't quite that good.

The game itself is a space chase/race game, wherein, according to the option chosen, space vehicles are driven either through a pre-established track or willy-nilly over the rudimentary

landscape chasing other vehicles. The game takes a half-hearted stab at using some of the PlayStation's power, including texture mapping and a 360 degree camera option, but it would take far more flash to make up for the missing quality in overall design.

Although there are only a few titles available on the PlayStation, it is obvious, in comparison, that *Cosmic Race* is substandard on almost every level. The graphics are childish and uninspired and the control is entirely awkward. If all were right with the world, this game would never have been made.

Rating: ★

Crime Crackers

Publisher: Sony Entertainment
Developer: Media Vision

Size: 1 CD-ROM
Release Date: Available now (Japan)

Crime Crackers is a troubled from its very opening sequence. As a perfect argument against mixing two gaming genres, *Crime Crackers* ends up being a lifeless Doom-style action game with a lackluster RPG undertone. The most rewarding feature available is the ongoing choice of three characters throughout the game.

Unfortunately, the difference in each character is primarily in

weaponry, and even that is little more than graphical. When it comes right down to it, *Crime Crackers* will be a disappointment to the action fan, and an effortless breeze for an experienced role player. *Crime Crackers* may, in the end, find an audience with younger gamers who're looking for their first taste of role-playing adventure, but the game is unlikely to make a significant mark elsewhere.

Rating: ★★

King's Field

Publisher: From Software, Inc.
Developer: From Software, Inc.
Size: 1 CD-ROM
Release Date: Available now (Japan)

There comes a time when a game designer must draw the line and decide into what genre their game fits. The creators of *King's Field* must have found this a difficult decision, leaving the gamer with a "little of this, little of that" style game. As a first person, corridor-wandering action game (you do the comparison, we're tired of mentioning the name) mixed with an RPG, this title is sure to leave the gamer frustrated on one level or the other.



In King's Field, they always come back to the holy man in the end

There are precious few examples of hybrids where one direction doesn't suffer at the expense of the other, and in this case, let's just say that *King's Field* is a good RPG. The action portion is painfully slow and lacking in any particular innovation, though strangely enough, it is not completely unrewarding — having never heard a scorpion bellow, there is a certain joy in it.

Rating: ★★



The object of Cosmic Race is to stay inside the track — if only that was an enjoyable object



Aim and fire, but don't bother dodging. Movement is not possible while firing. Still, Crime Crackers may find an market with a younger audience

PlayStation



Nina's toss is a constant, lethal threat due to the general ease in which it's pulled off



Law's specialty is a one-two combo ending with a full body slam, (above). It seems there's one in every fighter—and so here's big, dorky Jack (right)



CRUSHING

Tekken

Publisher: Namco
Developer: Namco
Size: 1 CD-ROM
Release Date: Available now (Japan)

If there are to be a whole host of polygon fighters for the next generation systems, then a certain amount of importance must go to establishing what makes one stand out from the another. The primary elements are, of course, graphics, unique characters, game control, and the satisfaction of snapping someone's neck with a special move. With stiff competition in the field, *Tekken* comes close to the top of all these categories, and hopefully will set the standard for all the clones sure to follow.

If one category comes first, it has to be the unique moves of each character, of which *Tekken* has in excess. Sure, each character can jump, punch, and kick, but only Yoshimitsu can run an opponent through with a sword, only Law can run up an opponent's chest as a prelude to a crushing body slam, and only Kazuya can snap an opponent's head so far left that the only way to go is right. These are the moves that make the replay feature at the end of each round all very worthwhile.

Tekken also scores big when it comes to game control. The special moves are easy to master with just the right dose of "Hey, how'd I do that?" Where *Tekken* falls just short of the perfect mark is in the graphics. The action is plenty smooth, and the characters themselves look good, but the background is stiff and lifeless and, at times, takes away from the 3D effect. The camera movement, on the other hand, is consistently where it should be, making the game play simple and a joy to watch. In all, *Tekken* is great fun especially in the two-player mode.

Rating: ★★★

Saturn

Deadalus

Publisher: Sega
Developer: Micronet
Size: 1 CD-ROM
Release Date: Available now (Japan)

Deadalus is a good bit of pretty packaging without much on the inside. The game itself can best be described as *Doom* in space, and if that's what players are looking for, then *Deadalus* delivers.

Unfortunately, this has not been a terribly interesting format since the *Doom* flood of 1994. Perhaps if *Deadalus* had broken even the last minor of innovative barriers, then there would be more to say in its favor, but there really is just nothing new here at all.

Other than the stale format and the rather uneventful exploration of endless corridors, *Deadalus* is not all bad. The

movement is very smooth and the graphics, monochromatic as they may be, have a real sense of depth and texture. The eerie soundtrack adds a great deal to the overall game play as well.

Rating: ★★★



Don't be fooled by the viewpoint, *Deadalus* isn't the action game it appears to be, but it is a mighty nice view for a strategy game

Gotha

Publisher: Sega
Developer: Micronet
Size: 1 CD-ROM
Release Date: Available now (Japan)

In some ways, *Gotha* is like a great game that almost was. Unfortunately, the game comes up a little short in overall substance.

At the core, there is an intriguing strategy game which looks great and is easy enough to get into, but playing *Gotha* inevitably leaves you with the feeling that there should be more game playing to it. There is also a problem in that each level feels very self-contained. There are certain elements that carry over from one level to the next, but not many, leaving the gamer with the feeling of playing several different, very short games.



Gotha's easy-to-slaughter baddies sit very still as you blast away

In its favor, each level does offer a completely new challenge unlike many strategy games where successive levels are simply a more difficult version of the last. Perhaps if there were more options in battle plans or available equipment, it might be a more compelling effort. Instead, there is a very small battle field on each level with little to no choice in hardware. As is, *Gotha* is a great tease, but not much more.

Rating: ★★★

Saturn

MAKE OR BRAKE

Daytona USA

Publisher: Sega
Developer: Sega/AM2
Size: 1 CD-ROM
Release Date: Available now (Japan)

If it weren't for *Ridge Racer*, there's little doubt that *Daytona USA* would have been regarded as the ultimate next generation racing game. But unfortunately for Sega, Namco nipped it in the bud, and *Daytona* now has a formidable adversary with which to contend. Just as the *Ridge Racer* and *Daytona* coin-ops went head to head, so their respective home versions will inevitably be compared.

In an effort to keep up with its arch-rival, Sega has concentrated on maintaining *Daytona*'s graphic detail, but the low resolution, relative lack of colors, and less-than-slick update hampers any chance of an overwhelming first impression.

The game's rough-and-ready looks, the classic symptoms of a rush job rather than evidence of the Saturn's innate technical inferiority, would be acceptable if the track and scenery were drawn to the horizon, but the crucial graphic weakness of AM2's conversion is that it manifests huge chunks of scenery disturbingly late. And while the more powerful arcade machine suffers from the same drawback (due to lack of memory in the Model 2 board's first version), it happens further into the distance, so the negative effect is minimized.

Without taking into account the most important criterion of all, gameplay, it looks as if *Ridge Racer* has established a lead over *Daytona*. But gameplay is where *Daytona* excels: the home version has retained almost all of the features that made the original an arguably more substantial experience than *Ridge Racer*. Powerslides, collisions, manically swerving competitors, and sophisticated artificial intelligence all help to compensate for any initial disappointment at the graphics. And powerslides play an especially important role in adding a unique dimension to *Daytona*'s gameplay.



The sheer number of opponents make the longer races a constant challenge with little room for error (left). When you approach a corner, you usually find that parts of the scenery are missing until the very last second, making it extremely difficult to think ahead

While initially uncontrollable, the correct braking/acceleration combinations prove rewarding with practice (while still falling a little short of the coin-op's elusive handling characteristics). And the AI of *Daytona*'s cars is greatly superior to *Ridge Racer*'s. Instead of blocking your way by accident rather than design, rival cars intelligently block your path with violent swerving maneuvers. This adds depth to the title, especially as the cars also jostle for position among themselves — the spectacular crashes which often result are among the high points of the game. The excitement is enhanced by the fact that there are up to 40 cars on the track at once.

There are many other positive features: despite the high number of vehicles, there's little slowdown; the arcade's four views were retained, each with advantages and disadvantages; there are various driving options — the Saturn mode, the Endurance, and the Grand Prix options; three different courses (giving *Daytona* a significant longevity advantage over *Ridge Racer*, which, despite its plethora of track options, essentially has only one course); and sparkling realism — when your car smashes into walls, melts rubber, and drives on grass, it suffers a degradation in performance as well as superficial damage.

The Endurance and Grand Prix options, providing pit stops, force you to adapt new tactics and can make the difference between winning and losing in the longer races

Rating: ★★★★★



rating 3DO

3DO

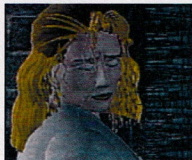
D no Shokutaku

Publisher: Warp
Developer: San-Ei Shobu
Size: 2 CD-ROMs
Release Date: Available now (Japan)

This is without a doubt the most heavily atmospheric and creepy title to date for the 3DO — or for that matter, any home system. A mildly *Myst*-influenced graphic adventure, the game pits its blonde protagonist, Lola, against particularly malevolent spirits and supernatural puzzles found in a ruined castle — a castle which appears out of thin air and in which she may have lived before.

From the intro sequence to its metaphysical conclusion, the game's rendered graphics are breathtaking, and it packs in enough psychedelic episodes and genuinely frightening shocks to give you nightmares. It does suffer, however, from a lethargic pace and a distinct lack of challenge — you can beat it in a few slow hours, even without knowing a word of Japanese. It's still powerful enough to draw you in, and we desperately searched for some excuse to rate it higher, but it's too slow, finishable much too quickly, and still leaves you wanting more.

Rating: ★★



One advantage *D no Shokutaku* has over other adventures is you see your characters' reactions

The Doraemons

Publisher: Shogakukan
Developer: Riverhill Soft
Size: 1 CD-ROM
Release Date: Out now (Japan)

The *Doraemons* is a kind of low-grade RPG intended for very

young gamers, and as such, it's meant to be somewhat educational as well as entertaining.

Doraemons are a group of internationally mixed, superdeformed, mystical robotic creatures (please, don't ask). There's an American Doraemon who totes a six-shooter, a Russian Doraemon wrapped up in a muffler, etc. They wander around with a young boy and teach him various



If following a round-headed, blue creature who speaks a foreign language is your idea of fun, then *The Doraemons* is just the ticket for you

lessons about the world through a series of adventures.

The gameplay is so simple you can move from scene to scene even if you don't know Japanese — you access a combination inventory and action screen, and by simply trying everything on hand you can eventually solve any problem — but if you don't understand the language you won't get much out of it. Even then, if you're more than seven or eight years old, the game is generally uninviting.

Rating: ★

Iron Angel of the Apocalypse

Publisher: Panasonic
Developer: Synergy Inc.
Size: 1 CD-ROM
Release Date: Available now

This is the US release of the Japanese *Tetsujin* (*Iron Man*, see **NO 2**). It's another *Doom* clone for 3DO, and the six months since it was originally reviewed have seen the introduction of much more smoothly animated and complex efforts like *Space Hulk*. However, what impressed us about *Tetsujin* originally was less its average game play than the psychedelic atmosphere.

This version is nearly identical, and in a bold move, Synergy has even subtitled the dialogue, rather than dub it. This may have been undertaken as a cost-cutting move, but it goes a

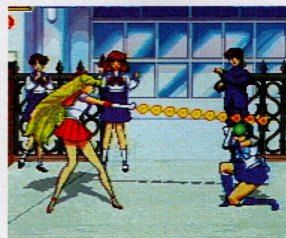
long way toward leaving the trippy dreaminess from the Japanese version intact, and in some ways, makes it creepier. Again, it's not better, just different.

Rating: ★★★

Pretty Soldier Sailor Moon S

Publisher: Bandai
Developer: Bandai
Size: 1 CD-ROM
Release Date: Available now (Japan)

Based on the popular *Sailor Moon* manga (a Japanese comic book) and anime series, this game could be called "Mini-Skirted Catfighter," since all of the nine characters you can choose from are super-powered grade school



If you're one of those players who like to choose *Chun-Li* and *Cammy* just to watch two girls fight, *Pretty Soldier Sailor Moon S* is the game for you

girls in abbreviated uniforms.

The game is nearly identical to the Super Famicom cartridge version, with the addition of *Samurai Shodown*-style zooming in and out feature as the players come closer or move farther away from each other.

The girls are undeniably cute, and some of the special moves — many involving psychic-powered Valentine heart projectiles — are good for a few laughs. While the premise is interesting, the animation is stilted, and the controls aren't as smooth as they could be. Overall, this game is of interest to fighting game collectors only.

Rating: ★★

Space Pirates

Publisher: American Laser Games
Developer: American Laser Games
Size: 1 CD-ROM
Release Date: Available now

Yet another light gun title from American Laser, *Space Pirates*



Shoot the bad guys, miss the good ones; keep that straight and you can play *Space Pirates*

looks and plays remarkably like *Mad Dog McCree I and II*, *Crimé Patrol*, *Who Shot Johnny Rock*, and their ilk. Except that this time, well, you're in space shooting guys with blasters

instead of six-shooters or Tommy guns.

If you own or have played even one title in American Laser's repertoire, you've pretty much played them all. The games are even structured the same, with one intro mission, followed by four missions you can play in any order, followed by the "action-packed finale." The video quality is generally good, the access time

is acceptable, and the acting is no more than laughably bad.

The game is entertaining enough, in a brain-dead sort of way, but we're becoming very fatigued with playing the same game over and over.

Rating: ★★

Yuu Yuu Hakusho

Publisher: Tomi
Developer: Tomi
Size: 1 CD-ROM
Release Date: Available now (Japan)

Unlike the cart version available for Super Famicom, this fighting game borrows heavily from its *Yuu Yuu Hakusho* anime counterpart. Although not unusual for a 3DO product to take up a lot of disc space with digitized anime footage, even the characters are digitized from animation cells. There are a good number of brawlers in the lineup, 15 to be exact, but the way they've been realized makes every single one look murky and flat, and only the real giant of the bunch — Toguro,

rating jaguar

3DO

GRIPPING



Gex

Publisher: Crystal Dynamics
Developer: Crystal Dynamics
Size: 1 CD-ROM
Release Date: Available now

For years, each new videogame system required a mascot with which it was identified — the NES and SNES had Mario, the Genesis had *Sonic the Hedgehog*, and even the Turbo Graf-X 16 had *Bonk*. Intended as much for marketing and consumer identification as a basis for games, these icons helped sell systems by giving consumers an image to follow. Sonic's irreverent attitude scored a hit with Sega's target audience, and the spinning blue hole-digger helped the company sell a lot of hardware even when the games weren't nearly as well

designed as Nintendo's excellent platformers featuring a certain personality-impaired Italian plumber.

You get the feeling that Gex, a media-addicted gecko brought to life using rendered sprites, would like to be the 3DO's mascot, and there's little doubt that Crystal Dynamics has created one of the most solid and enjoyable side-scrolling action games in a while. The game play is relatively varied. Gex is trapped in a television

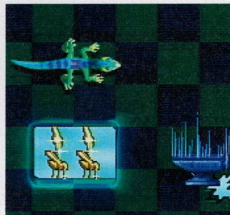
universe, and between the horror, jungle, kung-fu, and cartoon worlds, each with five stages, there's a lot of varying terrain, and the levels are very tightly designed. Gex himself can stick to walls, so in addition to the typical running, jumping, and attacking you're used to for this kind of game, there are a lot of ways to climb around and beat different sections.

However, as good as the game play admittedly is, Gex's main attraction lies in the personality of its star and (here comes that word again) the attitude behind the

overall approach the designers have taken. This is both the title's biggest strength and reason for a moment of sad commentary. Gex is a wise-cracking little reptile; between his hip one-liners and the levels' post-modern looks, much of the game is downright funny.

But turn down the volume, and there's really very little here you haven't seen or played before. And besides the sampled voices, there's next to nothing that takes advantage of either the 3DO's horsepower, or any of the other features that make it a next generation piece of hardware. This then begs the question, do we really need another console mascot to star in another series of side-scrolling platform games? Or, wouldn't we be better off chucking the whole concept and coming up with a new approach for the new high-powered systems?

Rating: ★★★



a figure with laughably exaggerated deltoids — comes close to being average sized.

The special moves, while simple enough to execute, range from run-of-the-mill to boring. Avoid this one at all costs.
Rating: ★



Ugly graphics and dull special moves make *Yuu Yuu Hakusho* one bad 3DO fighting game

Jaguar

Aircars

Publisher: Midnite Entertainment Group, Inc. (MEGI)
Developer: MEGI
Size: 16 Mbits
Release Date: June

Aircars is one of the first titles to utilize the CatBox, Atari's new networking hardware, enabling linkups to eight Jaguar systems together for multiplayer gaming.

In order to create a multiplayer environment, however, there is a downside. It is necessary to have not only one CatBox unit for each player (eight players, eight CatBoxes), but also a separate monitor, a separate copy of *Aircars*, and a separate



In *Aircars*, the rule is to shoot everything, and if it blows up, then it was not your friend to begin with

Jaguar, which complicates and raises the tab on things a bit. The game itself is a search-and-destroy-type mission play

with the now familiar first-person perspective. The vehicle is a tank-like hovercraft which moves smoothly over the hilly landscapes; and, aside from the fluid and somewhat realistic feeling of motion, there is, nonetheless, little to be excited about. *Aircars* is a good attempt in many ways, but it doesn't quite make the grade in a few vital categories, including, most

notably, graphics — which are extremely simplistic and lacking in any particular variety.

Rating: ★★★

32X

Fahrenheit

Publisher: Sega
Developer: Sega
Size: 2 CD-ROMs
Release Date: Available now

As in every Tru Video game ever made, you're the new guy who has to prove himself to the veterans. In *Fahrenheit*, you're a rescue specialist who has brave burning buildings to find and save women and children. *Fahrenheit* is unusual in that it lets you decide where to go, something that has never been done in an FMV game before. That feature alone almost makes this game fun.

However, the typically bad acting, grainy video, and lack of gameplay don't allow the fun to happen. Our suggestion is to rent the movie *Backdraft* and hold a controller in your hand, it's just about the same experience, only the acting is better.

Rating: ★★



In *Fahrenheit*, the only interacting you'll do is to choose which way all those burning bodies lie

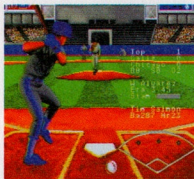
RBI '95

Publisher: Time Warner Int.
Developer: Time Warner Int.
Size: 16 Mbits
Release Date: Available now

The first 32X attempt at capturing America's once-favorite pastime (when the players aren't on strike), is *RBI '95*.

The game's got the players' license, a season mode, and some sharp graphics. What it doesn't have is a battery back-up. What that means is that to play a season you need to write down a 20-letter password each time you stop playing. If that isn't annoying enough, the season stats aren't even kept. The lack of those features gives this game no value as a baseball sim.

As far as action goes, *RBI '95* doesn't do that very well either. The pitching controls are far too simple, which makes



RBI '95 may fool you into thinking this is an upgrade from 16-bit baseball, but that's not the case

hitting the ball extremely tough. The fielders are miniscule, although your ability to control them is logical and simple.

RBI '95 is not the worst baseball game, but for the first 32-bit baseball game, it makes no strides forward. Disappointing.

Rating: ★★

Shadow Squadron

Publisher: Sega
Developer: Sega
Size: 16 Mbits
Release Date: Available now

This game doesn't have the flashy graphics or sound of a game like *Starblade*, but Sega did do one thing very right on *Shadow Squadron*: You have freedom of movement. The ship can actually be controlled to go after enemies in whatever order desired.

The controls are easy to master, and the choice of perspectives is a valuable and well-executed feature. The elements *Shadow Squadron* didn't get right are mostly cosmetic. The "multidimensional 3D stereo sound of QSound," (the 32X sound system as described by Sega,) manages a return to the bonks and bleeps of 8-bit gaming. And what about those 32,768 simultaneous colors? In *Shadow Squadron*, it's apparent all of those colors are shades of green.

In spite of its poor presentation, *Shadow Squadron* manages to produce some good gaming, which is something very new to the 32X.

Rating: ★★

Slam City With Scottie Pippen

Publisher: Digital Pictures
Developer: Digital Pictures
Size: 5 CD-Roms
Release Date: Available now

Let's say you own a Genesis, Sega CD, and 32X (first off, we're very sorry), and are looking for a way to harness all that gaming power. Well, may we suggest that you

32X

ZERO

Zaxxon's Motherbase 2000

Publisher: Sega
Developer: Sega
Size: 16 Mbits
Release Date: Available now

Either retrogaming is hip or ideas for games are just drying up. The revival of titles like *Donkey Kong*, *Tempest*, *Pitfall*, *Pac-Man*, and now, *Zaxxon's Motherbase 2000*, are bringing the arcade action of the '80s to the home — why?

The original *Zaxxon* featured a 3/4 perspective as well as the ability to change altitude and create a 3D feel for the first time. Now, a decade later, Sega brings you *Zaxxon's Motherbase 2000*, which isn't half the game of the original. The 3/4 view is still intact, but your ability to change the altitude is no longer an option. The only 3D movement is a tiny, miserable hop. So what's left of any note? Zero. Nothing. Nada. This game is a tragedy and a tag on the toe of the 32X's decaying corpse. If Sega can't match the technology of the '80s on its 32-bit "home arcade" unit, then there is slim hope of there ever being an advancement in gaming.

The gameplay consists of moving side to side and shooting everything. But to make matters even worse, the game suffers from slowdowns and glitches. There is an equally awful two-player combat mode, where you shoot each other across a flat screen, yuck. *Zaxxon's Motherbase 2000* is graphically ugly, slow, boring, repetitive, and a game that is truly unworthy of any stars. We'll still give it one star in memory of the much more playable original.

Rating: ★



There's your altitude change, a tiny hop. The original *Zaxxon* must be rolling over in its grave (top). Maybe the two-player battle mode is fun. Wrong, it's almost as bad as the main game

stop looking? Why? Because it's just not gonna happen.

Slam City was an average FMV Sega CD product that scored a three-pointer for an FMV game, successfully adding interactivity to an FMV game. What does the 32X version offer?

More of the same press-a-button-and-watch-a-dunk action. The trash-talking and well-done video add some enjoyment, but eventually, without the ability to control the action is frustrating and not much fun. As Ace, you have to play through five

rating cd-i pc

streetball opponents to get a chance at Michael Jordan's lackey Scottie Pippen. The key to winning is to watch the video and to break in at the right time.

The 32X video and sound are slightly better than the Sega CD, but the 32X version loses a star for taking up too much room on your entertainment center for no good reason.

Rating: ★★



In *Sim City*, if you time the steal just right, you'll be slammin'!

CD-i

Chaos Control

Publisher: Philips
Developer: Infogrames
Size: 1 CD-ROM
Release Date: Available now

With the PC success of LucasArts' *Rebel Assault* and Rocket Science's Sega CD entry, *Loadstar*, many people are eyeing track-riding shooters lately. Oddly enough, CD-i, the system that's probably best technically suited to deliver this type of game, is just now entering the market with a surprisingly slick new title, *Chaos Control*.

From start to finish, *Chaos Control* takes full advantage of the CD-i's Digital Video Cartridge (required for play), often with spectacular visual results. The animated sequences feature drawn characters reminiscent of the *Robotch* series, as they play out the somewhat simple story line of good guys with just one spacecraft versus bad guys with lots of spacecraft.

The game looks good, with strange spaceships slipping in and out of varying landscapes, exploding in brilliant flashes of color and light. But if you strip it of its looks, *Chaos Control* is the most basic of shooters. Players

looking for anything but the most mindless blasting action are almost certainly going to find this game tedious after a few hours of play.

In the end, if you liked the straightforward and mindless game play of either *Rebel Assault* or *Loadstar*, you'll find that *Chaos Control* delivers the same action, along with smoother display and control. If you didn't, this turns out to be nothing more than a miniature movie that won't play through to the end.

Rating: ★★

PC

Casino Tournament of Champions

Publisher: Capstone
Developer: Random
Programmed: Random
Size: 1 CD-ROM
Release Date: Available now

Casino Tournament of Champions' 3D-rendered, animated intro sequence does a great job of setting the stage for some serious casino action: As you're whisked in by helicopter to Pharaoh's, a fictitious casino hidden somewhere in the Nevada desert, it's easy to get into character as some kind of high-rolling professional gambler.

Of course, once that intro is over — and let's face it, you'll only



Casino Tournament of Champions is one of the few casino simulations that offers real poker, rather than just video poker

sit through it once — you're just playing another casino gambling game. To be fair, *CTOC* has more variety than most other casino games, offering slots, video poker, blackjack, roulette, craps, minicraps, and seven kinds of poker, as well as the network and modem options for multiplayer competition which add a new dimension. So if you're looking to add some casino action to your collection, *CTOC* is the package to buy — just don't expect anything spectacular.

Rating: ★★★

Extractors

Publisher: Vic Tokal
Developer: Millennium Interactive Ltd.
Size: 1 CD-ROM
Release Date: Available now

Fans of the *Lemmings* series will be in familiar territory with this new science fiction puzzle game from Millennium.

In *Extractors*, you control up to five members of the Finarjir people as they try to overthrow the evil Quarriors. You select your team from three different races of Finarjir — the Habbish, Bolds, and Raldeen — each with its own advantages and disadvantages. Your goal is to dig your way through the Quarriors' 30 hanging worlds —



Extractors challenges you to lead your choice of three different races of lovable Finarjirs into battle against their Quarrior oppressors

chunks of rock floating over the home planet — locating and destroying each world's shield generator. Sounds simple enough — but you've also got to be sure to pick up enough fuel from each world to fly to the next.

A couple of flaws keep *Extractors* from being as entertaining or addictive as the other puzzle game it imitates. It's extremely repetitive, and it suffers from an awkward interface — a real liability in a game like this. Only the patient need apply.

Rating: ★★

Hardball IV

Publisher: Accolade
Developer: Sport Accolade
Size: 1 CD-ROM
Release Date: Available now

Here's the latest game from a series which just keeps getting better. This time around, *Hardball 4* takes its already strong balance of action and statistical play and

dresses it up with terrific visuals.

Digitized play-by-play from veteran announcer Al Michaels is back — more detailed, varied, and believable than before, thanks to the magic of CD-ROM. Live major-league players are back, too (finally) — but this time they're



Ken Griffey, Jr. steps up to the beautifully-rendered SVGA plate in *Hardball IV*

included as part of the package rather than an expensive add-on.

The real story is the game's gorgeous, Super VGA graphics. Every hit scene has twice the detail of *Hardball III*, and the player animation is the most convincing on the market. Back that up with the same kind of responsive play and statistical depth that has made the *Hardball* series the one to beat, and you've got a top-notch simulation of America's favorite sport.

Rating: ★★★★★

Jagged Alliance

Publisher: Sir-tech Software, Inc.
Developer: Madlab Software
Size: 1 CD-ROM
Release Date: Available now

Sir-tech Software is best known for its *Wizardry* series of roleplaying games, but this new title, *Jagged Alliance*, is not so much an RPG as it is a strategy game.

In *JA*, you're a member of AIM — the Association of International Mercenaries. You've been tapped to bring a team of hired guns to Metavira Island to protect the vulnerable Fallow, a particularly coveted resourceful tree that only grows on the island — and whose sap has miraculous medicinal potential. Your enemy is Lucas Santino, a greedy research scientist who has taken over all but a tiny corner of the island to keep the sap for himself.

JA does have some role-

**HOW ABOUT A BIG 'MECH
WITH AN ORDER TO FRY?**



rating pc

PC

ROBUST

BioForge

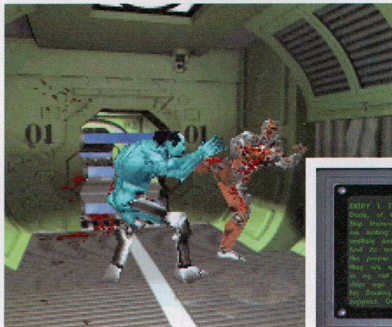
Publisher: Origin Systems, Inc.
Developer: Origin Systems, Inc.
Size: 1 CD-ROM
Release Date: Available now

With this unique action/adventure game, Origin ignored the conventional wisdom that says an interactive movie must have multiple CD-ROMs full of grainy, choppy, digitized video. What it ended up creating was an experience with a more cinematic feel, and much more interaction, than any other interactive movie on the market.

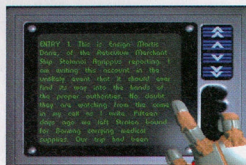
BioForge casts the gamer in the role of Lex, a poor soul who wakes up to find he's become the hideous result of a mad scientist's experiments — and that the abandoned lab he's trapped in is about to be flattened by a reactor explosion. Your goal is to find out your former identity — and survive long enough to get on with your life.

The game has some steep hardware requirements — you'll want at least a 486/66 and 8 MB RAM to enjoy it — but the payoff is impressive. Like many other recent graphic adventures, *BioForge* uses 3D-rendered characters, but unlike the others, the characters in *BioForge* don't jitter around like robots; they move and fight in a smooth, utterly convincing manner. The game has only two major drawbacks: an unintuitive keyboard interface and a slew of text screens that must be read if you want to understand what's going on. But those flaws aren't enough to keep *BioForge* from being one of the most unusual and intriguing adventures of the year.

Rating: ★★★



A devastating roundhouse kick will knock this bad boy off balance, but it'll take more than that to put him out of commission (left). Get used to this view, you'll spend a lot of time reading screen after screen of text before you finish *BioForge* (below)



playing elements — each character has skills and attributes that can improve with experience, and there are important items to search for while you're slowly wresting control of the island from Santino and his thugs. But most of the action centers on tactical combat, X-COM-style. So don't expect a deep roleplaying experience from this one — but if you're looking for an entertaining mix of RPG and strategy, grab it.

Rating: ★★★



Gremlin's *Jagged Alliance* features tactical combat that should be familiar to X-COM fans

Jungle Strike

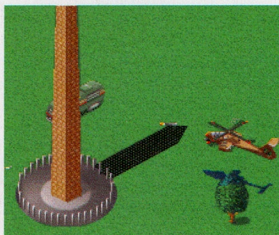
Publisher: Gremlin Interactive
Developer: Gremlin Interactive
Size: 1 CD-ROM
Release Date: Available now

PC gamers love to brag about how much more depth games are capable of having on their machines — but even the most loyal PC supporters occasionally long for some good, old-fashioned arcade action.

Thank goodness, then, for the PC CD-ROM version of *Jungle Strike*. In JS, you pilot a Super Comanche chopper — plus a handful of other instruments of destruction, like a Stealth Fighter and a hovercraft — through several 3/4 perspective overhead landscapes, tracking down terrorists and

making them wish they'd picked a different line of work.

Everything about JS has a classic cartridge-game feel (right down to entering a password to get to later levels — when will these videogame developers realize you can save a game to disk on the PC?), so it's just what the doctor ordered for PC owners



From the bigger, richer graphics to the variety of vehicles you control, *Jungle Strike* is a vast improvement over *Desert Strike*

who feel nostalgic for their old Segas and Super Nintendos.

Rating: ★★★

Machiavelli the Prince

Publisher: Microprose
Developer: HDI
Size: 1 CD-ROM
Release Date: Available now

A great deal different from the average conquest title, *Machiavelli the Prince* puts players into the real-world atmosphere of the Italy's 16th century Renaissance period, giving them full access to all of the many tools of power which a ruthless empire maker would need to handle for domination.

The game open in Venice, and has each player starting with a couple of ships and a few pieces of gold. From this point, fledgling merchants will find it necessary to earn enough gold to engage in the various maneuvers necessary to achieve power. As players grow in wealth and influence, they'll find themselves involved in various sorts of corruption, bribing



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rating pc

PC

DÉ JÀ VU

X-COM: Terror From The Deep

Developer: Microprose
Publisher: Microprose
Size: 1 CD-ROM
Release Date: Available now

This highly anticipated sequel from Microprose winds up riding the double edge sword as both a success and a disappointment. *X-COM 2* contains all of the great tactical action that made the first title such a success, with a new story line that pits man against an even more hideous set of opponents from the beneath the world's oceans. Unfortunately, with the exception of

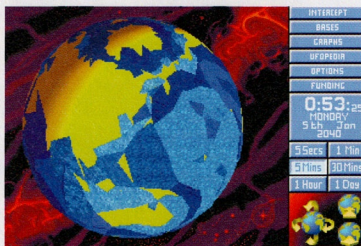
additional new graphics and attack sites, the game is almost identical in every way to the original. Players go through the game shooting down enemy subs, attacking the remaining aliens, and studying what they find just as they did in the first title. If your team doesn't do a good job of protecting the planet, then countries pull their funding and, eventually, you'll lose the game.

If you were expecting to find some new facets of game play to explore, or some grand new discoveries to make, you're in for a disappointing free fall. In the end, *X-COM 2* is still a phenomenal game, and has been scored as such, but it seems so much more could have been accomplished to make this game more than just a carbon copy of an old game.

Rating: ★★★



After you've shot down an enemy craft, you'll need to send in some troops to clean up what's left (above). When you collect enemy technology, you need to get your scientists working on it as soon as possible (inset). To ensure maximum funding, your base should be close to a very large population centers as possible (right)



senators and cardinals, sabotaging enemies' trading, and even assassinating those standing in their way.

Graphics and sound are minimal, neither detracting or adding to game play in any real substantial way, but there's more than enough here to keep strategy fans happy.

Rating: ★★★

Maabus

Publisher: Microforum
Designer: Microforum
Size: 3 CD-ROMs
Release Date: Available now

Maabus is an example of a rule all gamers would do well to keep in mind: the size of a game has no relation to its quality.

Maabus comes on three CD-ROMs, with something like one and a half gigabytes of game data — but try and find evidence of all that data on the screen, and you'll probably come up empty. Microforum claims *Maabus* is "the ultimate video game," but the company is only kidding itself.

Like most action games that run under Windows, this game is

far too slow and clunky to qualify as any kind of arcade action — and yet game play is too shallow and simplistic for *Maabus* to qualify as anything more. Enough said — unless looking at a handful of pretty pictures and dying in countless unpredictable ways is your idea of fun, spend your money on something else.

Rating: ★

Slipstream 5000

Publisher: Gremlin Interactive
Developer: Software Refinery
Size: 1 CD-ROM
Release Date: Available now

Think of this one as the game *Cyberace*, *Delta V*, and *Zephyr* should've been. Yes, it's more futuristic hovercraft racing, but *Slipstream* does it right.

You pilot your choice of high-tech flying machines through hazardous tracks across the world, from the stone walls of the Grand Canyon to the urban nightmare of a near-future Chicago. Your surroundings are all executed in smoothly scrolling, texture-mapped 3D graphics that create a convincing illusion of speed and danger. The object is to be first to the finish line, but *Slipstream* makes things interesting by throwing in combat — after all, if you can disable your competitors, it's easier to pass them. A variety of weapons and system upgrades are on hand — finish a race with enough money, and you can buy better guns or a faster engine to give you an edge next time around.

Slipstream 5000 arrived on the PC gaming scene with very little fanfare, but don't be fooled — it's a very pretty game that happens to be even more fun to play than it is to look at.

Rating: ★★★



Your *Slipstreamer* approaches the legendary "Ken Evil Bridge" on the Grand Canyon track

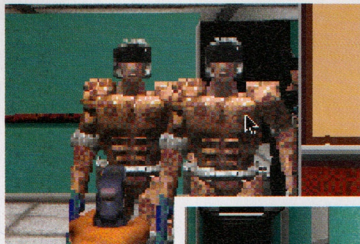
High Seas Trader

Developer: Impressions
Publisher: Impressions
Size: 1 CD-ROM
Release Date: Available now

High Seas Trader is one of those games that shows video clips and

rating macintosh

Macintosh



A surreal, floating snow-filled monitor plays for a dead audience. What the hell's going on here (top)? *Sensory Overload*'s soundtrack isn't soothing in the least... and these guys aren't sleeping



CLINICAL

Sensory Overload

Publisher: Reality Bytes
Developer: Reality Bytes
Size: 8.7 MBs
Release Date: Available now

Despite the in-your-face title, *Sensory Overload* is weirdly understated. You're a CIA agent posing as a test subject at a suspicious medical research facility, and when you wake up with a headache, a roomful of dead bodies for company, and the sound of gunshots ringing out in the corridor, you know you'll be earning your pay today.

While basically your standard point-of-view action game, *Sensory Overload* adds a few features and twists to the formula, like the ability to carry a weapon in each hand for real Schwarzenegger-style carnage, and a text window to aid in plot development. While the physical assumptions of the game are sometimes odd (you can't really look up or down, but ducking allows you to see the floor much better than standing), it has a minimal, clinical look perfectly suiting the mood and terrific, pulse-pounding music. Definitely worth checking out.

Rating: ★★★

ray tracing aren't necessary to make a good solid game. Impressions has taken the best aspects of games like *Pirates Gold*, *Privateer*, and numerous other trading games, and combined them with an excellent sailing and combat interface to create a unique title that delivers exquisitely entertaining play.

The game creates its absorbing environment by introducing all of the tools

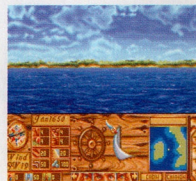
necessary to exist in the game world, and then stepping aside, enabling players to live out their lives within this alternate reality. Would-be merchants can trade all over the world in 15 different commodities, from cotton to opium (our personal favorite), searching for ports that will demand the lowest price and delivering them to the cities that pay the highest amount of coinage. If you're more aggressive, you may want to try

your hand at eliminating pirates, or perhaps becoming one yourself.

Another option is to spend your time exploring, looking for unique items of value to sell when you reach home again. No game plays the same, and if you get bored with your style of play, you can change up what you're doing and move on.

Although the graphics and sound aren't the strongest available, they still do a good job of pulling players into the game world and delivering a believable game. Although the subject material may be a little too dry for some gamers, *High Seas Trader* is definitely a must for strategy fans.

Rating: ★★★



When you're at sea, you need to keep a close eye out for potential trading locations

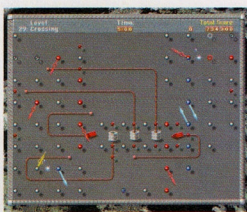
Macintosh

ClockWerx

Publisher: Spectrum Holobyte
Developer: Callisto Corp.
Size: 1 CD-ROM
Release Date: Available now

Here is another piece of addicting, abstract strangeness from Spectrum Holobyte. Endorsed by Alexey Pajitnov, who brought you *Tetris*, *ClockWerx* is just one of those games you have to play for yourself because no amount of talk is going to convince you that moving clock hands around a bunch of dots is this much fun.

The master clock of the universe is broken, and you get the chance to fix it by maneuvering a spinning clock hand through a variety of increasingly bizarre clockwork constructions made from living, mechanical forests of oil globes, spikes, bombs, cannons, and other spinning clock hands. Watching the more complicated levels is, indeed, a little like looking into a simple yet somehow astoundingly complex, cosmic



Even in an addicting game like *ClockWerx*, (endorsed by Alexey Pajitnov), there are times when you've gotta use explosives

machine. Using only four keys and two basic moves, *ClockWerx* will, nevertheless, keep you awake deep into the night.

Rating: ★★★★★

Marathon

Publisher: Bungie Software
Developer: Take 2
Size: 12.3 MBs
Release Date: Available now

The colony starship *Marathon* has been invaded. Damaged systems flicker and buzz in the dark corridors, homicidal aliens lurk around every corner, and a half-cracked Artificial Intelligence seems to be running the show.

Another *Doom*-style maze-crawler but much more so, *Marathon* is full of little touches that make the difference between a passable game and a very good one. These include full movement in a sprawling, texture-mapped nonorthogonal environment; the ability to look/shoot up and down; nice responsive lighting effects, stereo sound, realtime automapping; a creepy subplot or two; and an enemy-intelligence scheme that actually seems to work (the aliens here still aren't ever gonna be on *College Bowl*, but God, at least they're smarter than *Doom*'s demons). It all makes for a fittingly tense experience. *Network* play becomes outright nightmarish. This comes highly recommended.

Rating: ★★★★★

Master of Orion

Publisher: Microprose
Developer: Take 2
Size: 1 CD-ROM
Release Date: Available now

Strategy game of the year, *NOT*. When this stodgy mess isn't actively playing hide-and-get-frustrated with you, via its interface — even the most excellent Microprose Mac conversions have this particular disease — it's leading you by the

rating sega cd



In *Orion*, every star system is a separate eco-industrial complex to maintain, monitor, and defend

hand so tightly you can actually feel your circulation stopping.

Master of Orion is an empire-builder in the vein of *Pax Imperia*, *Civilization*, and (shudder) *Spaceward Ho*, and features such a niggling array of weapons, diplomatic actions, and who-cares technologies to try out each encounter, decision, and consequence assume the bewildering sameness of a mass of tax returns, with fewer perks.

Closet economists will enjoy the painstaking web of interacting influences here—ecology vs. growth, technology vs. production, etc.—but the patterns do take time to emerge and it might be

more efficient to simply pursue a master's degree in sociology.

Rating: ★★

Star Trek 25th Anniversary Enhanced CD-ROM

Publisher: InterPlay
Developer: MacPlay

Size: 1 CD-ROM

Release Date: Available now

A newer version of the best-selling computer game, this enhanced CD-ROM features tons of high-quality recorded dialogue featuring the voices of William Shatner, Leonard Nimoy, and the rest of the classic *Star Trek* crew, plus all the game play, authentic sound effects, and the adorable moralizing of the original.

Players assume command of the *Enterprise* in a series of episodic levels. And everything is here—landing parties; dogfighting starships, yes, you get to use "auxiliary power";

disposable redshirts, yes, they do get torched; onboard computer banks bristling with facts, clues, and references; nostalgic McCoy/Spock catfights; the Prime Directive (go on, break it); and those worrisome Starfleet performance evaluations. If you like *Star Trek*, you've just gotta have this game.

Oh, don't whine about how you already bought the floppy disk version! Do you want to hear Captain Kirk philosophize or don't you? All right then! Move it, mister!

Rating: ★★★★★



Starfleet Command will evaluate your performance in this mock combat with another Federation heavy cruiser in *Star Trek*

Sega CD

Mad Dog II: The Lost Gold

Publisher: American Laser Games

Developer: American Laser Games

Size: 1 CD-ROM

Release Date: Available now

As one might expect, given the limited Genesis color palette and single speed CD-ROM drive, the main difference between this version and the 3D0 version (NG 2)



They had to do a sequel, since there were so many unanswered questions from *Mad Dog I*!

Sega CD

MEDIC!

Surgical Strike

Publisher: Sega
Developer: Sega

Size: 1 CD-ROM

Release Date: Available now



On the plus side, *Surgical Strike* has all the action you could ever want, and for a Sega CD title, the video quality is quite good



Sega's latest foray into the tough, harsh, competitive world of FMV is a step up from *Midnight Raiders*, which puts them square in the "mostly harmless" category. In this one, you're the gunner of an assault hovercraft (which is getting to be the assault vehicle of choice), trying to put an end to the shenanigans of your stereotypical Middle Eastern terrorist. By now you should know the drill—your vehicle travels along a predetermined path, targets present

themselves, and you line up the crosshairs and judge whether to blast missiles or 20 mm cannon shells into them. You decide which way to turn at intersections (which means you have a choice in which predetermined path you travel), and you do have a map to follow, so there is actual strategy in figuring out the best route to take.

However, while the pace is fast, the learning curve is steep, and you'll begin to tire of watching the same stuff blow up again and again and start wishing you'd actually get somewhere. Worse, at the end of each stage there's a climactic shootout in which you have to simply guess which of the targets you're shown is the right one. A wrong guess sends you back to the beginning of the stage—who needs that?

Rating: ★★



On the down side, the video quantity is limited, thus you wind up watching the same sequences over and over

Sega Genesis

EXECUTION

The Punisher

Publisher: Capcom
Developer: In-House
Size: 16 Mbits
Release Date: Available now

The story is always slightly different, but the game is always the same. This time you are the Punisher, a self-appointed judge, jury, and executioner, who is out to take on the mob, with only the help of his crazy partner Nick Fury in the two-player game only.

What do you do? You repeatedly pound the punch button until you have beaten everyone on the screen, then you move on to the next screen and do the same. When you kill an enemy they magically disappear and leave their weapon behind (flame thrower, knives, uzis, etc.). You can pick up their weapons and use them on other enemies. This same process is repeated for six monotonous levels, which are easily defeatable.



Since they outlived dwarf tossing, this is the only way you can throw people for distance (inset). Look familiar? Final Fight fans (if there are any) will recognize these generic screens (above). Picking up enemies' weapons, like this knife for instance, adds some mild pleasure, but do no more damage than fists (left)



Nothing new and not much good can be found in *The Punisher*. Capcom wouldn't even burn early E-proms because it didn't deem *The Punisher* worthy of the expense. After playing this game, we have to agree. The person responsible for putting out *The Punisher* deserves a good spanking.
Rating: ★

Brett Hull Hockey '95

Publisher: Accolade
Developer: Radical
Size: 16 Mbits
Release Date: Available now

Arguments over who is the better hockey player — Wayne Gretzky, Mario Lemieux, or Brett Hull, may wage on for hours. Yet, when it comes to who makes the best hockey videogame, none of their names or games come even close.

Brett Hull Hockey '95 is one more feeble attempt at capturing the brutal action of NHL Hockey. The game includes the valuable players' license, which is wasted on a game that is nothing close to simulation; the magical voice of announcing legend Al Michaels, which isn't anything but terribly annoying; and roto-scoped players, which means choppy animation and slow game play.

The only element that saves *Brett Hull Hockey '95* is that there are so many horrible hockey games available, it's tough to pick only one loser. However, unless you're playing EA's *NHL '95*, you are playing one of the many losers.
Rating: ★

IMG International Tennis

Publisher: Electronic Arts
Developer: High Score
Productions:
Size: 16 Mbits
Release Date: Available now

About the only sport besides bowling (if that's really a sport) that Electronic Arts has not done a simulation on is tennis. Now, with the arrival of *IMG International Tennis*, only bowling is left (please don't do it, please!)

IMG features 17 tour stops, 4 playing surfaces, and 32 professionals to choose from (however only fanatics will recognize any more than 1 or 2). The unique serve interface is the best yet, saving stats adds to the replay value, and the ability to

is that the video doesn't look as good and that the access times are noticeably longer. Other than that, this is the same basic experience: watch the video, respond by shooting the bad guys.

We have to admit that if you're going to take this approach, American Laser Games does it better than anybody — compare this to *Ground Zero Texas* from Digital Pictures, and you'll begin to appreciate how smoothly structured its titles are. However, this is still the kind of stimulus-response, shooting-gallery action that defines gaming at its most basic level.
Rating: ★★

Genesis

Aerobiz Supersonic

Publisher: Koel
Developer: Koel
Size: 16 Mbits
Release Date: Available now

Koel, the strategy-minded developers behind such titles as *Romance Of The Three Kingdoms*, has taken to the friendly skies. For all those young Republicans who want to build an international airline, *Aerobiz Supersonic* enables you to operate your own airline.

As CEO of your own airline, you are in charge of advertising, plane maintenance, route negotiations, and handling disasters like crashes and strikes. Select from four eras in aviation history, including two futuristic scenarios. One to four players can battle it out capitalist style for air supremacy. The graphics and sound aren't much, and there isn't any action to be found. However, sim fans are sure to be pleased with the level of detail.
Rating: ★★



Who? *IMG*'s whopping total of 32 real pros are mostly unknowns who have retired to the golf course or to the announcing booth

rating snes

argue a call is the best tennis feature yet (John McEnroe would definitely agree). The four-way play makes *IMG* a good party game, and the large players and smooth animation is solid.

The smooth animation, however, slows down the game and leaves *IMG Tennis* at a disadvantage with Sega's *ATP Tennis*. Sim fans should go with *IMG*, and actions fans should pick up *ATP*.

Rating: ★★★

Kawasaki Superbike Challenge

Publisher: Time Warner Interactive
Developer: Domark
Size: 16 Mbits
Release Date: Available now

Road Rash without personality is the best way to describe Time Warner's latest effort in the motorcycle racing genre.

Kawasaki Superbike Challenge features 15 circuits to choose from, including the Suzuki 8-hour endurance race with night riding and rider change-overs. The game attempts to capture realistic motorcycle racing with weather changes affecting performance, pit stops, and tire wear. The riding view is great for feeling the speed of the race, but the lack of tumbling crashes, and any color whatsoever make *Kawasaki Superbike* a bit boring.

Performing on a circuit and keeping track of points does add to the overall replay value, but eventually the redundant, mundane races and lack of character traits in bikers make this game uninteresting.

Rating: ★★



The split-screen two-player race would add to *Kawasaki Superbike Challenge*, if you could see anything on these tiny screens

Pete Sampras Tennis

Publisher: Spectrum Holobyte
Developer: Codemasters
Size: 16 Mbits
Release Date: Available now

While *Pete Sampras Tennis* may have absolutely zero simulation



Just try returning hard hit serves with those tiny players in *Pete Sampras Tennis*, we dare you

value or game play, it has added something to the videogame world. *PST* is the first game to come on a J-Card, which allows players to plug two controllers into the cart along with the two in the machine. This could end the days of buying expensive peripherals, like a multitap for example, that you only use on one or two games.

Other than that, *Pete Sampras Tennis* is an action-oriented tennis game without much action. The only real tennis player is Pete Sampras who says, "[This is] the most challenging tennis game you'll ever experience." We say, "Give it up, Pete."

Now, who do you believe? The guy in tight, white shorts with his name on the box? Or a well versed — and well dressed — team of experienced gamers.

Rating: ★★

Stargate

Publisher: Acclaim
Developer: Probe
Size: 16 Mbits
Release Date: Available now

What's this? Acclaim is doing a game based on a movie, again. That's right, on the heels of other disastrous license-based games, Acclaim brings you the less than stellar videogame, *Stargate*.

The smooth animation and reasonably good-looking backgrounds almost make you forget that you're running from left to right killing all in your way. The game follows the story of the movie and the likes of Kurt Russell are captured well. This game is definitely a challenge, and can be some fun. It looks and plays, however, just like *Flashback*, *Prince of Persia*, *No Escape*, and so on...

Overall, *Stargate* is a well done game. It's just that this kind of thing has been done so many times before, and better.

Rating: ★★★

SNES

Chavez II

Publisher: American Softworks
Developer: Sculptured Software
Size: 8 Mbits
Release Date: Available now

This game bears a striking resemblance to *Legends of the Ring* from Electro Brain — which shouldn't surprise anyone, since Sculptured Software developed both games. As such, it's one of the better boxing titles available, with the added feature that most of the text is in Spanish.



Chavez II's perspective gives a good view of the action, and if you're a fan of the sport, it's a decent title

The viewpoint is from slightly behind your fighter and to the side, which gives an excellent view of the action. There's not much to differentiate it from most other boxing titles, although boxing is such a simple sport that, given the limits of a 16-bit system, you really can't expect much else. In fact, other than the novelty of Spanish text and Chavez on the box, you're just as well off picking up the aforementioned *Legends of the Ring*.

Rating: ★★

Justice League Task Force

Publisher: Acclaim/Sunsoft
Developer: Blizzard Entertainment
Size: 20 Mbits
Release Date: Available now

This one has been a long time coming, held up in limbo by Sunsoft's financial woes. But, leaping to the rescue is a new distribution and cross-licensing deal with Acclaim (which amounts to a practical buyout, turning Sunsoft into a development house for the marketing juggernaut) which has finally made the title available. Was it worth the wait? That's a good question.



Justice League controls well enough, though the selection of moves should seem familiar

There's little doubt that *Justice League Task Force* is a solidly constructed, good looking, easily playable brawler with a fair selection of characters — nine in versus mode, including Batman, Wonder Woman, Green Arrow, and so on. It's animated well, and a valiant attempt has been made to base the combat moves around each hero's particular set of powers.

However, this points out the problem — they still wind up being standard fighting game fare. Wonder Woman uses her lasso the same way *Mk's* Scorpion uses his harpoon, for example. Also, the idea that, say, Green Arrow could beat up Superman in a fist fight is more than a little ridiculous.

As sprite-based, side-on fighting games go, this one is better than average, but besides the DC comics characters, there's nothing about it that stands out. Comic book fans and fighting game fanatics should get a kick out of it, but everyone else is likely to yawn.

Rating: ★★

NCAA Final Four Basketball

Publisher: Mindscape
Developer: Bitmasters
Size: 16 Mbits
Release Date: Available now

This one is a major disappointment. With so many basketball titles crowding the market, one that looks as good and is animated as well as this should have gameplay to match.

There's a lot of cool extras, like including the top 64 college teams with official logos; and the ability to edit team members' names so they jibe with whomever made the roster this semester; plus the designers have incorporated some aspects of the sport other game overlook, like intentional fouls. However, the controls for passing, dunking, etc., and the menu system used for substitutions are far too cumbersome for such a fast sport.

Arcade

RETREAD

Mortal Kombat III

Publisher: Williams
Developer: Williams
Size: Two-player Standup
Release Date: Available now

If there's any truth to the adage "success breeds complacency," then *Mortal Kombat I & II* were successful. *Mortal Kombat III* is every bit as good as the first two games, but it isn't any better.

All the bone-crushing, blood-spilling goodness is firmly in place, but the new characters are desperately in need of something endearing and the action is familiar to the core.

You will undoubtedly recognize characters like Sub-Zero and Liu Kang, but there are some new faces as well. Sheeva, for example, has the advantage of four arms at her disposal yet, aside from a four-fisted, crushing fatality, her special effect isn't that effective. And Night Wolf is by far the most interesting of the fresh faces, but overall, his charm is limited as well.

In the emerging genre of 3D fighters, *MK III* came onto the scene with a handicap. Consequently, the question was whether there was room going to be enough room for innovation left in the 2D genre to give *MK III* the force of the first two installments. The answer is not an indisputable no, but it's hard to imagine, after playing *MK III*, that there will be much call for an *MK IV*, at least not in its current format.



If you liked *Mortal Kombat I & II*, you will probably like this new one just as well, but in an industry which depends on innovation to keep it fresh and interesting, *MK III* just doesn't deliver.

Rating: ***

Bone-crushing action is delivered by characters both new and old



After Mortal Kombat III, will there be a need for MK IV?

The net effect is to slow everything to a dribbling crawl. It's pretty looking, but dull.
Rating: **



The animation and action are good, but *NCAA Final Four* falls flat in its cumbersome control

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WORD LIST and LETTER CODE chart

POWERN PRESS.....K BLASTA WRECKP
BREAKZ PUNCHS SPRAY.....E TURBOV
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CRUSH.....O SCORE.....R SLANTL CHASE.....P

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CLIP AND MAIL

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The demand for early issues of **NEXT Generation** is growing, and a 'complete set' has already been recognized as approaching collector's item status. This is your chance to complete your collection.. Each issue featured:



NG 1

- talking An interview with Trip Hawkins (President & CEO of The 3DO Company)
- ng hardware A comprehensive, in-depth look at all the next generation systems preparing for battle in 1995
- ng special The Violence Tapes. Four of the world's most controversial game developers in one virtual room



NG 2

- talking Shigeru Miyamoto (creator of Mario, Donkey Kong, Zelda, Pilot Wings)
- ng hardware Saturn: The complete story so far
- ng special Gaming on the information superhighway (aka "Joyriding")
- ng special Revival of the Fittest. Just why is retrogaming so popular?



NG 3

- talking Tom Kalinske (President & CEO of Sega of America)
- ng hardware Does PlayStation live up to the hype? A look at Sony's bid for world gaming domination. Including a four-page profile of Ridge Racer
- ng special What's wrong with the PC? (Part one). Can gaming on the PC survive?
- ng special Making tracks (aka "the noble art of game music")
- ng software Virtua Fighter: Saturn's fighting chance profiled

NG 4

- talking Nolan Bushnell (the inventor of Pong, and the founder of Atari)
- ng special Atari: from boom to bust, and back again. The complete history of the oldest videogame company in the world
- ng special An audience with Gunpei Yokoi, the inventor of Nintendo's Virtual Boy and GameBoy
- ng special What's wrong with the PC? (Part two). Where is the PC game scene heading?



NG 5

- talking Steve Race (Sony Computer Entertainment's President & CEO)
- ng hardware Ultra 64: the story so far. Nintendo will fight like a tiger to defend its own turf, and Ultra 64 is its main weapon. A 13-page exposé
- ng special Apple: the ripe stuff. The story behind the latest company to develop a game machine



NG 6

- talking Peter Molyneux (Bullfrog's leader, and possibly the smartest guy in gaming)
- ng hardware M2: 3DO bites back. On paper, Trip Hawkins' new hardware is "10 times the power of Sony's PlayStation." But can 3DO make it work?
- ng special PlayStation's Disciples. A look behind the scenes at how PlayStation games are made.



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Because interactivity is a two-way thing

Recently, I went to the store to by *NBA Jam TE* and *Mortal Kombat II* for my 32X. When I was waiting in line I noticed the used games they had on the shelf, *Excitebike*, *Contra*, *Punch Out*, *Arkanoid*, etc. and I began to remember how much I liked *Contra Hard Corp*. I went to the Genesis section and picked up *Contra Hard Corp* and looked at the back, it didn't look much like the *Contra* I remember. I had heard that *Super Motocross* was like *Excitebike*, so I asked the guy working there about it, and he said it paled in comparison, he also said *Contra Hard Corp*, while a decent game really doesn't compare to the original *Contra*. I began to look at the other 32X games, I already had most of them, and while most are fun to look at, they also don't have much substance, especially *Cosmic Carnage*. *Cosmic Carnage* is a game of the '90s, it makes high use of pointless blood and carnage, uses a wide array of colors, and from a visual standpoint, is pleasing, but it really is not fun.

There were used 8-bit Nintendo systems there for under \$30, and most of the good, old games were below \$10. I ended up buying *Contra*, *Punch Out*, *Rush n' Attack*, *Blades of Steel*, and *Excitebike*, as well as the Nintendo system, which I had sold years ago, for the approximate price of *MKII*. I realize there must be a lot of anti-new game, pro-classic game letters, especially after your article on the resurgence of older games, but I also think people should understand that there are a wealth of games, based not on appearance, nor blood and guts, but on fun.

These games are cheap, there is no \$65 risk involved in purchasing them, they are old and easy to find used, most can be found for approximately \$10, so a bad buy is not that upsetting.

Don Smith

Yes, we believe there are many great games on 16-bit systems. And of course we are constantly comparing new games to older ones, and newer revisions to their older predecessors because while developers learn how to work on the new 32-bit and 64-bit systems, they'll be working out the balance between gameplay and graphics, making mistakes along the way. History conveys to us that the first wave of games aren't necessarily the best, and so it may be wise to enjoy the games you really enjoy from the previous systems — particularly when they're selling for so little.

Iwanted to comment about a couple things. KentDB9438 comments about the PC and wonders why it isn't the gaming machine, and you wisely correct him that a large percentage of its user base isn't for gaming at all. He also mentions that he can just upgrade his PC if it starts getting behind, as if game systems can't be. Traditionally they haven't been, but he ignores computer add-ons for the 2600, Intellivision, APF MP-1000, and Colecovision, not to mention upgrades like the Starpath Supercharger for the 2600, speech synthesizers for the Odyssey 2 and Intellivision, and Sega's Sega CD and 32X for the Genesis. Videogame systems can

be made upgradeable too, it's just that most companies don't bother with it.

Also, Leonard Herman corrects some mistakes from your Atari article in 04 (as did I; see previous letter), but he or you made a typo in the correction — Atari's sister arcade company was K&E Games, not Key Games. Yeah, I nitpick. It would also have been nice if you had given Leonard's address so people could order his book *Phoenix* — it's a good take on the history of videogames and should be read by anyone interested in where our hobby came from.

Russ Perry Jr
5970 Scott St
Omro, WI 54963-9413

Sure, we can give an address for Leonard Herman. We have the publisher's address, which is Rolenta Press, PO Box 3814, Union, NJ, 07083-1891, located on the inside of the book, and we believe you can find him through that route. Also, check *Essential Reading* on page 29 for a review of the book, *Phoenix: The Rise and Fall of Videogames*.

Iam writing regarding the Nintendo Ultra 64. I've read that it will be a cartridge based system, therefore I am asking, will the Ultra 64 be compatible with Nintendo's fine library of SNES cartridges? This would be really great because people who already own SNES games and can't buy Ultra 64 games immediately, could still have some fun with their older SNES games.

David Nurse

Unfortunately not, David. Nintendo has never really

supported the idea of backward compatibility (at least, without having to purchase additional hardware) and Ultra 64 will be no exception.

Iwould like to add my voice to the outcry against your premature review of *Fight for Life*. Someone at **NEXT Generation** has been quoted as saying "Now that I've seen the final version, I stand by my review." Baloney! The game still isn't finished, as both the developer and Atari have stated repeatedly. The developer even attempted to respond to your irresponsible journalism, but apparently **NG** was too busy or too unbalanced to reply...

I've enjoyed your magazine for some time now, and always thought it to be a standout among a motley crew of gaming mags. I like my Jaguar, but will be the first to admit that many of the games are below what one should expect from a next generation console.

The point is — you guys screwed up. If the final *Fight for Life* sucks rocks, so be it. I can easily see this as being the case. But reviewing something as final when, by your own admission, it was not, is irresponsible journalism. *Fight for Life* is undergoing further revisions and improvements as I write this. You not only tarnish Atari's and Francois' image by your actions, but you tarnish your own credibility. Get it together and accept responsibility for your error, or you've lost a reader.

Jason K. Gillespie
jasong@lenmon.csufresno.edu

Thanks for taking the time to contact us Jason, and not simply

corresponding

drawing conclusions before hearing the facts. Thanks to all the other readers who enquired about the same issue. You'll find all the details of the unfortunate incident on the page 84, and how we can set the record straight.

I would like to address an issue which seems to be under-rated lately. This is the issue of cost. With all of these new systems coming onto the market very soon, it seems the talk is all about capabilities. Systems that do not possess the best hardware, and the best games — seem to get left behind.

While impressive hardware, and big name games are very important, do not forget that when it comes down to it, if you cannot afford to buy the machine, you cannot buy it. Let's look at the main market for the next generation of machines...

Teenagers. Besides the relative few who have rich parents (who also don't depend on videogames for entertainment because they have many other things to do), how many teenagers can afford to drop \$300 or more on a videogame system?

Young Adults. Once again, with the exception of the few rich and famous, most young adults have many bills to pay. Rent, food, newly born children, cars, utilities, on and on and on... Most of us however, are either college students (who see money as often as they wake up for that 8 am Algebra class), or working too hard for too little. I happen to be a little of both, I am in the military, and I go to college... My wife is in college also... I could not afford to drop \$400 for a new system and three games.

Now, since the majority of systems will be bought by these types of people, let's not forget that money can sometimes be the bottom line.

John Reinhold
4132 Carmichael Rd. #220
Montgomery, AL 36106

Are you related to Tom Kalinske? Seriously, we completely agree. And the whole issue of price is central to the belief that while Ultra 64, PlayStation, and Saturn may turn everyone's heads in

terms of raw system power, 3DO could still be the machine to take the 32-bit crown. See page 17.

I picked up a copy of your mag (#3) i think. Anyway, I got the feeling it was written by a bunch of 40 year old-internet/computer geek-child pornography freakin' pedophiles!!!!!! You guys suck. The PS-X is not going to be as successful as you think. Why-because ahhhhh who cares, I can't believe you guys haven't grown out of videogames. I hope you just kicked the habit. I hope your proud of yourselves. Your probably big Star Wars Fans and Trekkies too! You guys are a bunch of fags and probably suck at videogames (and other things too!!!)

jordan.volkart@uucp.wimsey.com

Just a reminder, ladies and gentlemen, of what the mainstream is like. Scary!

How long does it take to get information into a magazine? Most of the articles you guys write don't appear in NG for about two months. This is true for almost all magazines. What's the deal? I'm not criticizing or anything. I just don't know how the publication business runs. Thanks for your time.

Diego Rodriguez
Fresno, CA

That's the way it is Diego. We try to cram as much news as we can into each issue, and as late as possible, to make it as up-to-date as possible, but it always takes at least six weeks for any magazine to be output into negatives, stripped, printed, bound, cut, and distributed.

After reading NG 5 volume 1 of your magazine, I noticed that in finals on the very last line of the review of the Atari Action Pack for the PC, you printed the line "You've come a long way, baby." As a dedicated Amiga user I find it very disrespectful to both the Amiga and its users to use an Amiga slogan for the review of Atari brand software.

On behalf of the 6 million Amiga users worldwide, I formally request that you print an immediate retraction of that line.
stargate.usis.com

Wow. And we thought that all the Atari/Commodore rivalry was extinct.

I just got your latest magazine on the Ultra 64! Great magazine! I especially like the cover... how it's plastic and everything! Well, just sayin' how much I like it. How much did it cost to make the cover like that?

dpatters@wane-leon-mail.scri.fsu.edu

It's pretty expensive, but we figure it's worth it.

First, I want to thank you, from the bottom of my heart, for creating a magazine worthy of us "older" gamers. The articles, the reviews, the interviews, and the complete lack of any cartoons make NEXT Generation a first rate magazine. Keep up the good work.

I wish to speak of my grave disappointment with my 32(wre)X. I purchased it right before Christmas (must have been the egg nog...). What a waste of plastic, 32-bit? My 3DO is 32-bit gaming. The 32X is more like a Genesis on steroids that went impotent in the process. I've come to expect better from Sega. Sega has touted its commitment to excellence and quality from the rooftops. How do they justify Afterburner or that hideous Star Wars Arcade, or Knuckles Chaotix? Mr. Kalinske... lose the rodent fetish!

This gives me serious concerns about Saturn. If Sega is willing to pull such a blatant marketing scam like 32X, what then can we expect from Saturn? If their "commitment to quality and excellence" is so easily subverted, I will have great difficulty forking over another \$400 for the Saturn. Even though 3DO has not spread like wildfire, there are some excellent, true 32-bit games available for it and they get better all the time. Whether or

not the full potential of the 3DO is ever realized, gaming has certainly been better for the experience.

Sometimes I think Sega has lost that hungry edge it had with the Genesis. And a final word to Tom Kalinske: Don't piss off your user base, especially those of us with jobs and credit cards. We are the only thing that stands between success for the Saturn and your job application with Sony.

Pete Werner
Vidjunkie2@aol.com

Tom Kalinske has let the public decide on the future of Sega for itself. Sega Saturn is out, but no one's forcing you to buy one.

Congratulations to Sega's Tom Kalinske on a fine interview with NEXT Generation. Tough questions, cool answers — my money's on Sega to rule the 32-bit wave as it ruled the 16-bit one.

Simon Campbell
Seattle

After reading your article in the May of NEXT Generation, I was intrigued by the technology behind the Taos "virtual processor". How does one contact Taos Systems? Please forward an address or phone number, if it is no inconvenience. Thank you for your assistance.

T. Brown
71544.1033@
COMPUSERVE.COM

A lot of our readers have expressed an interest in getting in touch with Taos Systems — so in answer to innumerable requests, the company can be contacted at (410) 290-8825.

Damn it. I can't believe that Sega snuck out the Saturn so early. Once it heard news of the Ultra 64 being delayed, it took its opportunity. This is very good marketing strategy. Many people will find a way to raise \$400, many people will buy the Saturn, and Sega will again create a big user base with inferior hardware.

It makes me mad that Nintendo would do this. I hope

corresponding

Sony will see this as an opportunity and get its system out soon. Knowing that it will take a year for Nintendo to get it in gear, many of us will purchase these systems, and Nintendo will lose a big portion of its market.

Bigsixty@aol.com

You draw the parallel between the 32-bit race and the 16-bit race of 1990, when Sega released the Genesis a year before Nintendo issued the SNES and achieved a big head start that Nintendo has only just caught up with. But as Nintendo freely admits (and Sega would be more than happy to agree with), the reason that the Genesis did so much better than the SNES for so long was that Sega marketed the Genesis better and had stronger games (most significantly *Sonic The Hedgehog*) than Nintendo.

"There may have been many mistakes made in the launch of the SNES" commented Nintendo's US Chairman, "but releasing it a year later than the Genesis was not one of them." He argues that after being on sale for a few months, both machines had sold about the same. It was only after the launch of the SNES that Genesis started to accelerate away.

As for what happens in the 32-bit market, only time will tell.

Will the programmers of Ultra 64 Doom be using TLMMI [trilinear mip-mapped interpolation] to eliminate the pixelization normally found in every other version of Doom? I'd really appreciate hearing about it. It'd make the recent postponement of Nintendo's Ultra 64 a bit easier to swallow...

Frank Eva

You can be sure that the Id Software/Williams collaborative effort behind the development of Ultra 64 Doom will be making the most of all Ultra 64's built in hardware graphic features.

I've got a copy of the May issue right in front of me, opened to the breaking news section, specifically, "US

Saturn to launch on September 2?" Hmm...well, OK...just from the title, I was expecting the system September 2...imagine my surprise when, just yesterday (May 5), I'm walking by Software Etc. and see them setting up the display for the Sega Saturn! Of course I ask, "Do you actually have this in?" They say, "Yes sir! Only got four!" (grin) Well, I guess Sega's date wasn't set in concrete. So I got one of these, an extra control pad, and a copy of *Daytona USA* (of course!). They're both awesome! (grin). But I have a complaint or four.

Regarding the control pad, I was wondering if any of you found this to be true as well: Isn't the D-button just a little uncomfortable? I find it almost impossible to go diagonal, and if I use my thumbs, my hand tends to feel like I have writer's cramp, it's shaped so oddly. This always happens with my left hand, not with my right since I use fingers.

As for the price, \$400 for a system, one control pad, and one game! That's all they put in! You said yourself they could easily include three or four at very little cost... What's with that?! I'm seriously considering taking the thing back, then waiting until it comes down \$100 or so and comes with *Virtua Fighter 2*, or maybe even get the PlayStation, if they really can bring it out for \$350 or less...

This may seem a little superficial, but the logo sucks! C'mon, balloon letters!! They should've left it the same, or at least used the same font they use with the Genesis, it looks stupid!

So it's a good system. They got some good games, the controllers are uncomfortable, it's too expensive for what you get, and the logo sucks! I'm sure there are other good features, but I'm too tired to think about them right now... oh, the Sample CD? Ehh... is it just mine, or do all of them have a problem with the Bug video? Mine seems to have an error in it, and it crashes some way through. I'm guessing it might not've been written to the CD correctly.

Thanks for listening to me!

Ben Moore

There you go. A slice of real videogame life. What have other readers made of Saturn's premature launch?

First of all, I would like to congratulate you on the best magazine in the video and computer gaming business. Your extensive coverage on systems cater not only to the average player but also to the more mature and advanced gamer. My question involves an issue that I have never seen in any magazine, that is until it was exposed in **NG**. Employment in the Video gaming business. I am in my second year at The University of Miami and I am majoring in Computer Science. I am very interested in going in to the area of video game programming. Since **NG** is the only magazine who has listings for hiring in this industry, I was wondering if you could send me the name and numbers of the major companies so that I could find out what their requirements are to join their respective programming crews.

Alexander Lopez
alopez@students.miami.edu

The best that **NEXT Generation** can offer in terms of employment help is the 'now hiring' section (which regular readers will notice has grown considerably in size over the past few months), starting on page 86. This month alone you'll find eight pages of recruitment advertisements for the videogame industry. We're sure that each of these companies is looking for someone unique — there really is no "standard" qualifications for making games. Send in some applications, speak to personnel managers whenever you get the chance, and you'll soon work out what particular discipline of game development you want to specialize in, and what relevant qualifications would be useful in that position.

Another alternative for people anxious to seek formal training with a view to entering the videogame business is Nintendo's DigPen school in Vancouver (see **NG 7** for details). Good luck!

And our survey says...

Thank you to all the readers who took the time to respond to the survey cards that were enclosed with a percentage of your favorite gaming book (that's **NEXT Generation**, by the way). It's likely that we'll conduct more research as we grow, so if you do come across a form asking you for your thoughts, please take the time to fill it out and send it in. It's probably the best way we have of making sure that our coverage reflects what you want to read.

Here's how you work out demographically. Just remember that a statistician is someone who can sit with their head in an oven, their feet in a freezer box and yet tell you that, on the whole, he feels completely normal.

- Your average age is 24.7 years
- You've been playing videogames for more than 10 years
- You'll spend more than \$435 million on software alone in 1995
- You spend 12 hours per week playing games
- You spend 2.5 hours reading the magazine
- 88% of you read at least three quarters of the magazine
- 97% of you either keep your magazine for future reference or pass it on
- 32% of you own five or more gaming systems
- 62% own three or more gaming systems

• These are the systems that

you own:	
SNES	67%
PC	64%
Genesis	64%
3DO	37%
NES	37%
Sega CD	36%
Game Boy	31%
32X	24%
GameGear	23%

Jaguar 21%

* These are the systems that you intend to buy:

Ultra 64 60%
PlayStation 59%
Saturn 40%
3DO 8%

* You're connected to the Internet. Forty one percent use an Online service, 21% intend to sign on soon. You use the following providers:

AOL 23%
Direct access 19%
CompuServe 15%
Prodigy 9%

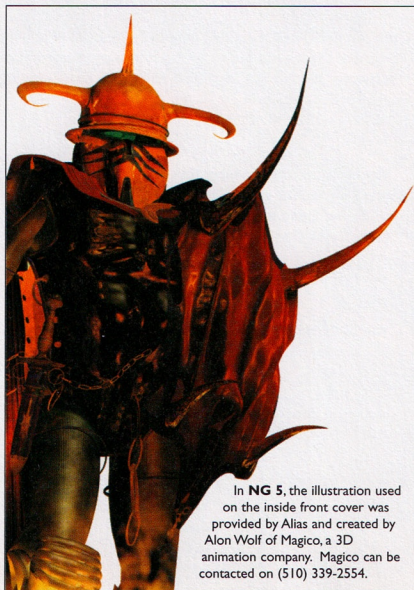
* Your average income is \$42,900 annually (66% have credit cards, 29% have Gold cards, 41% hold stocks, bonds, or mutual funds)

* Only one other advanced gaming magazine is read by more than 3% — yes three percent — of our readers.

Fight For Life

In NG 5, NEXT Generation unknowingly reviewed an unfinished version of the Atari Jaguar game *Fight For Life*. Having been given the green light to go ahead with the review from Atari, it was subsequently discovered that the game was still being worked on by François-Yves Bertrand and his team.

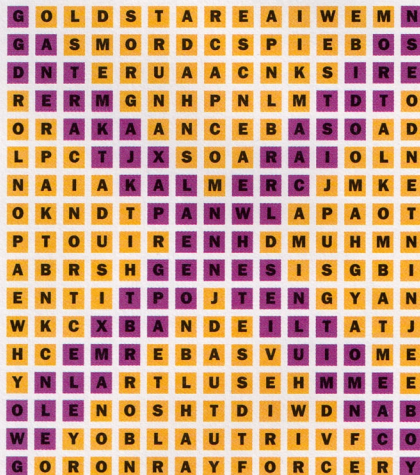
NEXT Generation wishes to apologize to François and his team for any embarrassment and stress this may have caused, but in no way accepts responsibility for the unfortunate situation. It is not, and never will be, our policy to review any thing other than 100% finished products. We will re-review *Fight For Life* as and when a review copy is made available to us.



In NG 5, the illustration used on the inside front cover was provided by Alias and created by Alon Wolf of Magico, a 3D animation company. Magico can be contacted on (510) 339-2554.



Take a minute or two out and put your video gaming knowledge (not to say finely-honed, championship-level, word-spotting abilities) to the test. If you can find and circle 10 of the 18 video game related words (hidden diagonally, backwards, or — most deviously — upside down), you will be eligible for the drawings. You could be one of 20 winners of an XBAND modem for Genesis or SNES and a free 3 month subscription to the XBAND Network. Each winner will also receive the same prize for a friend of their choice. Entries must be postmarked by August 31, 1995.



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Address: _____ Zip: _____

State: _____

Phone Number: (____) _____

Game System: Sega Genesis/Super NES (circle one)

Send your entry form to:
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20823 Stevens Creek Blvd, Suite 300
Cupertino, CA
95014

Dept.: NG Contest
[Photocopy entries accepted]

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Manage teams to develop, test, and produce interactive games on the 3DO system. Preferred: 5+ years experience in producing video games with laser disc, CD, video or film; budget and schedule management experience required.

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The 3DO Company, 600 Galveston Drive, Redwood City, California 94063. Facsimile: 415-261-3120.



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Must have worked in the entertainment industry before, preferably on the Super NES and/or Sega Genesis platforms. Applicants should be familiar with MAC sequencing and sound design tools, and must have a very good working knowledge of Midi sequencing, FM synthesis, Digital sampling and editing.

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Must possess strong "C" and problem solving skills along with experience in: 80X86, 68000, 6502, RISC, 2D or 3D Graphics techniques. Previous game development experience or a college degree is required.

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Successful applicants will have experience in computer based graphics, animation, and be familiar with Autodesk 3D Studio, AnimatorPro, DPaint, and conventional illustration.

3D Artists:

We're looking for people with strong character animation and art experience (College and/or production job), strong skills in both character and structure design, and experience with IBM and/or SGI machines. Applicants should be well-rounded 3D artists, capable of modeling, animating, creating texture maps, and lighting. Must have experience with some or all of the following packages: Alias Power Animator, Wavefront, Autodesk 3D Studio, AnimatorPro, Photoshop, Fractal Design Painter, and Deluxe Paint Animation.

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Personnel Dept. N3
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For consideration, candidates must design a marketing plan (not to exceed 2 pages) for a hypothetical video game and forward, with cover letter and resume, to: Human Resources Department APM.



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- * Must have PC Windows programming exp.
- * Must have 2+ years exp. programming in C
- * Strong 3D / Math programming background
- * Previous game exp. or college degree
- * CD-ROM development experience
- * Solid tools development experience
- * Avid game player a plus

ARTISTS:

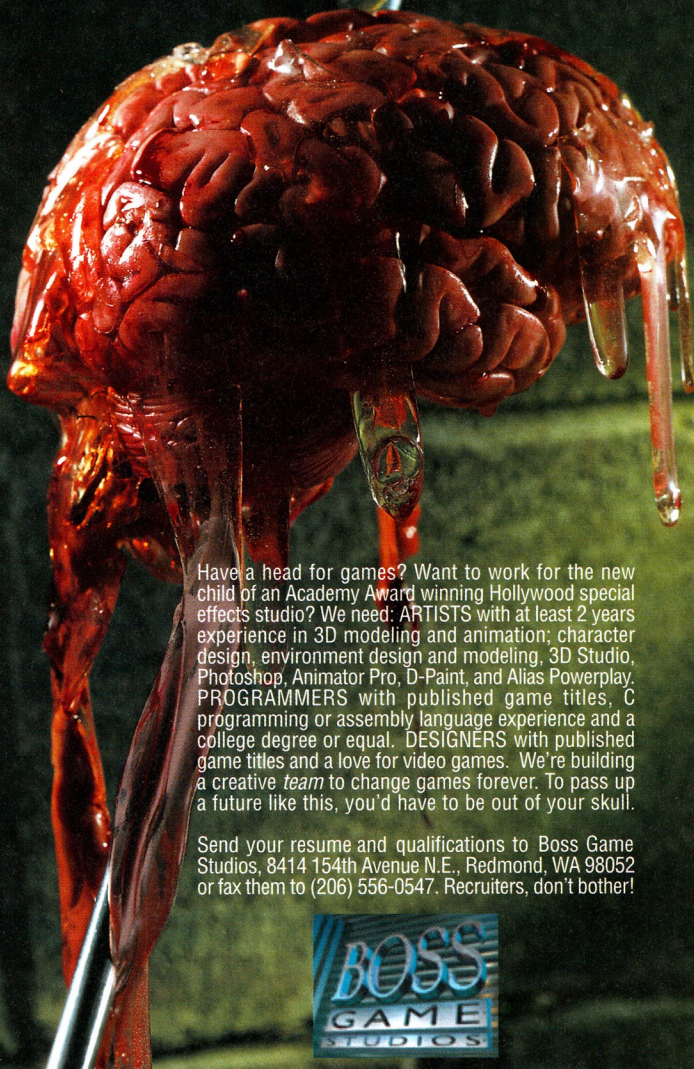
Artists experienced in any of the following:

- * Photoshop, 3-D Studio, Strata, Form Z, Painter
- * Debabelizer, Premiere, CoSA, Electric Image
- * SGI / Wavefront / UNIX experience
- * Must have PC / Windows / DOS and/or MAC exp.
- * Game industry experience a plus
- * Texture mapping / modeling experience a plus
- * Avid game player a plus

If you have the right stuff to join the Black Ops Team, fax or mail your resume and work samples to:

Black Ops Entertainment, Inc.
c/o Human Resources
2121 Cloverfield Blvd, Suite 204
Santa Monica, CA 90404
Fax (310) 828-0630

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Have a head for games? Want to work for the new child of an Academy Award winning Hollywood special effects studio? We need: **ARTISTS** with at least 2 years experience in 3D modeling and animation; character design, environment design and modeling, 3D Studio, Photoshop, Animator Pro, D-Paint, and Alias Powerplay. **PROGRAMMERS** with published game titles, C programming or assembly language experience and a college degree or equal. **DESIGNERS** with published game titles and a love for video games. We're building a creative *team* to change games forever. To pass up a future like this, you'd have to be out of your skull.

Send your resume and qualifications to Boss Game Studios, 8414 154th Avenue N.E., Redmond, WA 98052 or fax them to (206) 556-0547. Recruiters, don't bother!



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Join the Network Development team as we evolve the **XBAND** on-line service. We have a number of opportunities for **UNIX** programmers, PC programmers and Oracle database programmers in the following areas:

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 Experience of developing console or computer games.
 Strong "C", assembly language and problem solving skills.
 An interest in games and an appreciation of gameplay.
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 Knowledge of RISC programming techniques.
 Formal education is not required, experience is more useful.

ARTISTS

40K to 70K+

We are looking for artists with experience in some or all of the following:
 3D modeling and animation.
 Character design.
 Background and environment design and modeling.
 Knowledge of the following tools is preferred:
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 - Picture Publisher - IPAS Routines.
 Artists should have two or more years experience working on games.

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We're looking for people with vision and creativity who can see their concepts through development, by leading others and working on multiple projects at the same time.

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These roles are ideal for experienced 3D computer artists with backgrounds using tools such as 3D Studio, Softimage, Photo Shop, Alias, or other related tools and can handle 3D modeling and texture map generation.

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First, you have to love to play the games (and know what works and what doesn't). Then you have to be able to program them using C, Assembly and microprocessor programming. Background in entertainment system development is a plus.

We're already working with entertainment giants like Sega. So can you. Fax your resume now to (407) 826-7044 or mail to us at: Lockheed Martin, MP329, Dept. OA9506, 12506 Lake Underhill Road, Orlando, FL 32825. E-Mail: palma@escmail.orl.mmc.com
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PHILIPS

Talent Wanted

NEXT Generation is looking for a writer to join its team.

NEXT Generation sets high standards and only the very best need apply. Relevant qualifications are useful, but we'll happily consider a vastly-motivated, undiscovered talent — just prove to us that you're the person for the job. We need someone who eats, sleeps, and breathes games; someone who can address themselves equally to a genre-busting fighting game or the next generation of rendering hardware; someone who knows why *Super Mario Bros 3* on the NES is a better game than *Donkey Kong Country* on the SNES (or someone who can convince us otherwise); someone who can handle the immense pressure of both tight deadlines and our ambition level for the magazine.

An insider's knowledge of the gaming industry is also useful for this full-time position in San Francisco, CA. The hours are long and hard, but the rewards immeasurable — **NEXT Generation** is already the most highly regarded and sought after magazine in its field. Send your resume and a 500 word review of a next generation game to:

Neil West, Editor
NEXT Generation
Imagine Publishing, Inc.
1350 Old Bayshore Highway, Suite 210
Burlingame, CA 94010

Or e-mail both to us at ngonline@imagine-inc.com

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Lead and manage art teams setting the design of key entertainment titles. Experience in 3D and 2D graphics, animation and video production.

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Strong software architecture skills, strong 3D graphics knowledge, and real time systems experience.

Software Engineer

Experience developing and shipping entertainment products. Strong C programming required.

Send resumes to Electronic Arts, 1450 Fashion Island Blvd., San Mateo, CA 94404 attn. RC-MN.

Electronic Arts' marketing department is looking for experienced people to market entertainment software for PC-CD, 3DO, PlayStation and Saturn in the Entertainment division. Positions are open at both corporate headquarters in San Mateo, CA and at Origin in Austin, TX.

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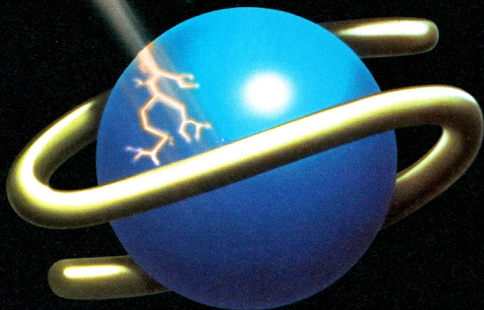
SNEAK PREVIEW

This is the closest we could get to
showing you our new controllers for
3DO™, Sega Saturn™ and Sony PS-X™.
Innovation and originality take time!
The Best Never Rest!



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Next Month



Sega Saturn

It's here. Its launch in May took everyone by surprise. But was it rushed?
Just what corners did Sega cut to steal a headstart over Sony?

Everything you ever wanted to know about Sega Saturn. Next month.

NEXT Generation #8
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KIDS TO ADULTS

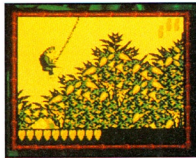
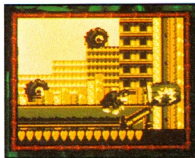



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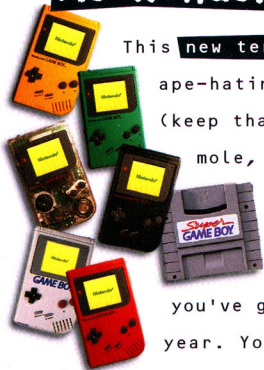
New Donkey Kong Land has and the best graphics ever seen on Game Boy.

First there was Donkey Kong Country®, it was like nothing anyone had seen before. Now all that excitement has been crammed into an awesome new game. **Donkey Kong Land™** is here, and it's only available for Game Boy® and Super Game Boy®. You'll recognize the **hairy** heroes for sure, but everything else is entirely new. There are four wild **new worlds**, each with its own sinister boss. There are savage **new levels** that take Donkey and Diddy from pirate ships to mean city streets.

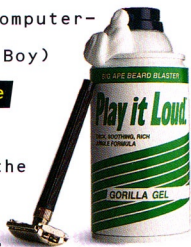




30 new levels, all new bad guys
No wonder it has such huge fans.



This new terrain is populated by the most bizarre crew of ape-hating slimebags ever. There are flocks of flying pigs (keep that umbrella up), psycho squids and a helmet-hurling mole, to name a few. Add to all this fully computer-rendered graphics, (a first on Game Boy) and a funky banana-yellow cartridge (it was in Kong's contract), and you've got the biggest, hairiest adventure of the year. You're gonna love it so much you might even scratch, grunt and throw food a little more than usual.





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